

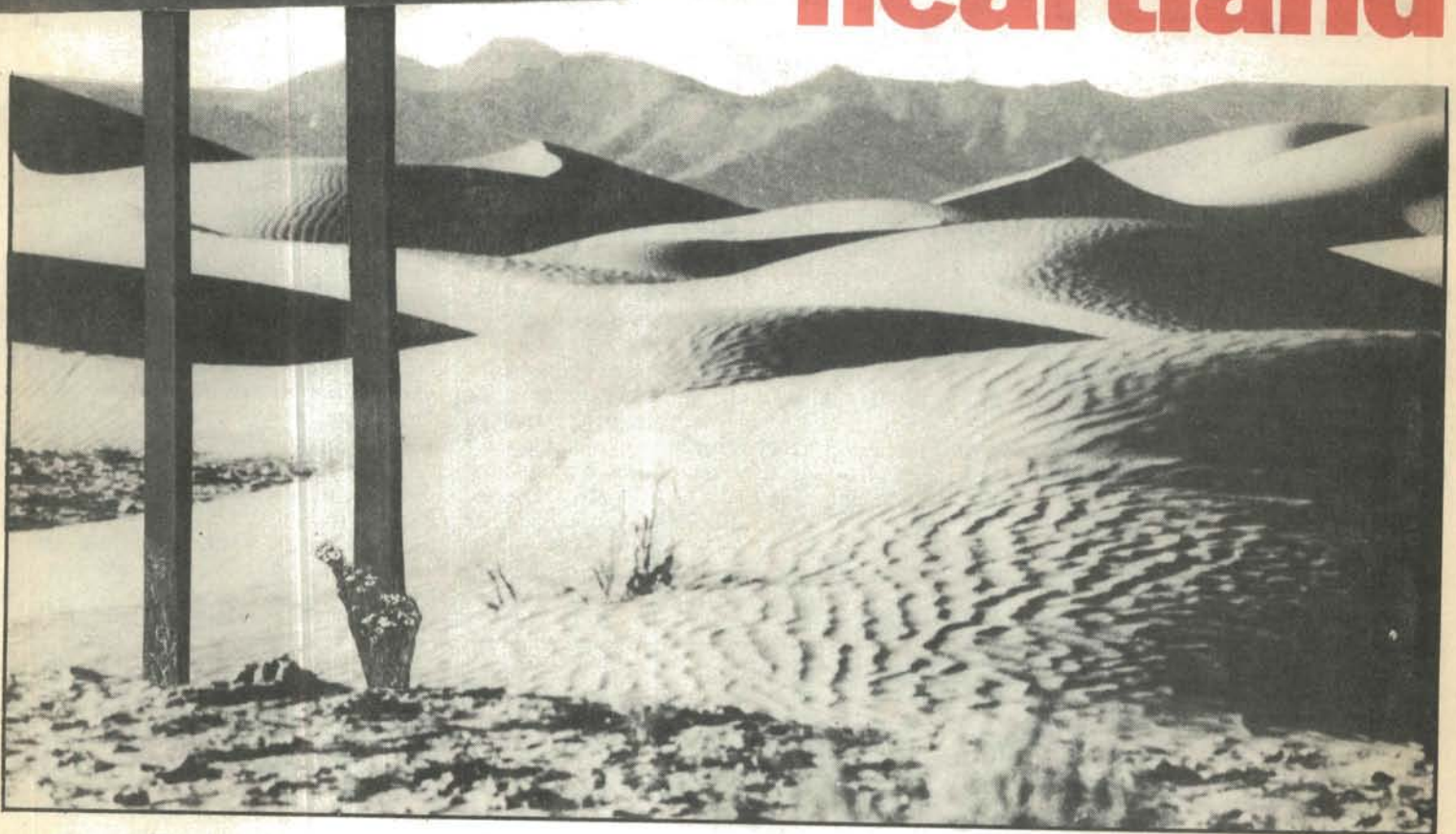
NEW STATESMAN

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**What
happened
to
Britain's
industrial
heartland**



**Beyond the Fragments : through feminism to socialism
Jerusalem: the cost of 'unity'
Hidden dangers of Jim Prior's new Codes of Practice**

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Has the TUC nothing to say about Poland?

THE TUC HAS made itself look cowardly and ridiculous over the issue of Poland. Every other trade union federation in Europe worth the name has taken a position on the Polish workers' upheaval. The Italian unions have even demanded visas for a delegation to meet the strikers. Yet from Congress House there have been nothing but ambiguities and evasions. One simple sentence would have done the trick — 'The British TUC views with favour the assertion of rights by Polish workers; in particular their right to an elected union leadership'. No spokesman has been able to bring himself to utter this dread pronouncement.

It is not, as some Tory papers have misleadingly claimed, that the TUC is militant on South Africa and Chile and silent on the Eastern bloc. The TUC's record in international affairs is, as we have shown in the past, uniformly depressing. Too often, it has enjoyed a sweetheart relationship with corrupt and reactionary union establishments in the Third World. Only a few weeks ago, during a visit to Greece, Len Murray astounded audiences by his praise for the wonderful relations existing between workers and the government in that highly capitalist country.

It would be easier to respect the TUC's delegation if it was composed of devout Communists. Mr Ken Gill, one of its members, is indeed a courageous and outspoken defender of the Soviet Union in all its aspects. But the remainder are men with effectively no principles at all, whose chief aim is to get through life by offending the minimum number of people. Not for nothing have most of them in the past been labelled 'moderate'.

Until last weekend, the head of the Polish trade union federation was Mr Jan Szydlak. He has now been dismissed. No doubt Mr Gierk was absolutely right to dispense with him. But does Len Murray need a fact-finding mission before he questions the right of governments to appoint and dismiss union leaders? Is the principle of freely-elected union negotiators a principle or not?

Again, the Polish shipyard workers have demanded the closure of special shops for bureaucrats and policemen. Does the TUC need to think twice about such an obvious reform? While working class families must queue for goods that often do not appear, the Polish elite is insulated from shortage by its own version of private enterprise, based on foreign currency. Nowhere in the capitalist world, outside the worst of neocolonial Africa and South America, is such a system tolerated any more. Can silence on this point be justified?

Ten years ago, after dozens of workers were shot down in the streets of the northern ports,

the Polish 'trade unions' set up a commission of inquiry into the distressing events which led to the bloodshed. That commission has yet to make its report. Would it be pre-judging things too much if the TUC were to ask, in a fraternal manner, exactly how this inquiry is getting on? It is not every day, in Europe at least, that industrial relations are conducted in such a manner.

THE FACT that Frank Chapple and other hardnose right-wingers have been making a ballyhoo is beside the point. Fear of 'giving aid and comfort to the forces of reaction' is a tired old response, utterly discredited by the experience of Stalinism. It is even more inappropriate in the present case, because the Western establishment appears to look on the Polish events with distinct alarm. So far from 'West German revanchists' stirring up trouble for 'socialist Poland', it is West German finance capital which keeps Poland afloat, and worries about the prompt repayment of its loans. This dismal concern with mere 'stability' is what one expects from bankers. But trade union and socialist internationalism is supposed to be different. And one of the principles of internationalism is that one does not demand less for other workers than one expects for oneself.

It is still not clear how many of the strikers' political demands will be met. But they have attracted to their side almost all the healthy intellectual forces in the country — Andrzej Wajda being the most distinguished so far — and have broken the state monopoly of power and discussion. Even the newspapers are now carrying uncensored reports of the proceedings. Many unpopular officials have lost their jobs. Distribution is being reorganised on a more equitable basis. In short, large groups of miners and shipyard workers, previously unorganised, have done more for their fellow workers in a month than the British TUC has done for any workers in ten years.

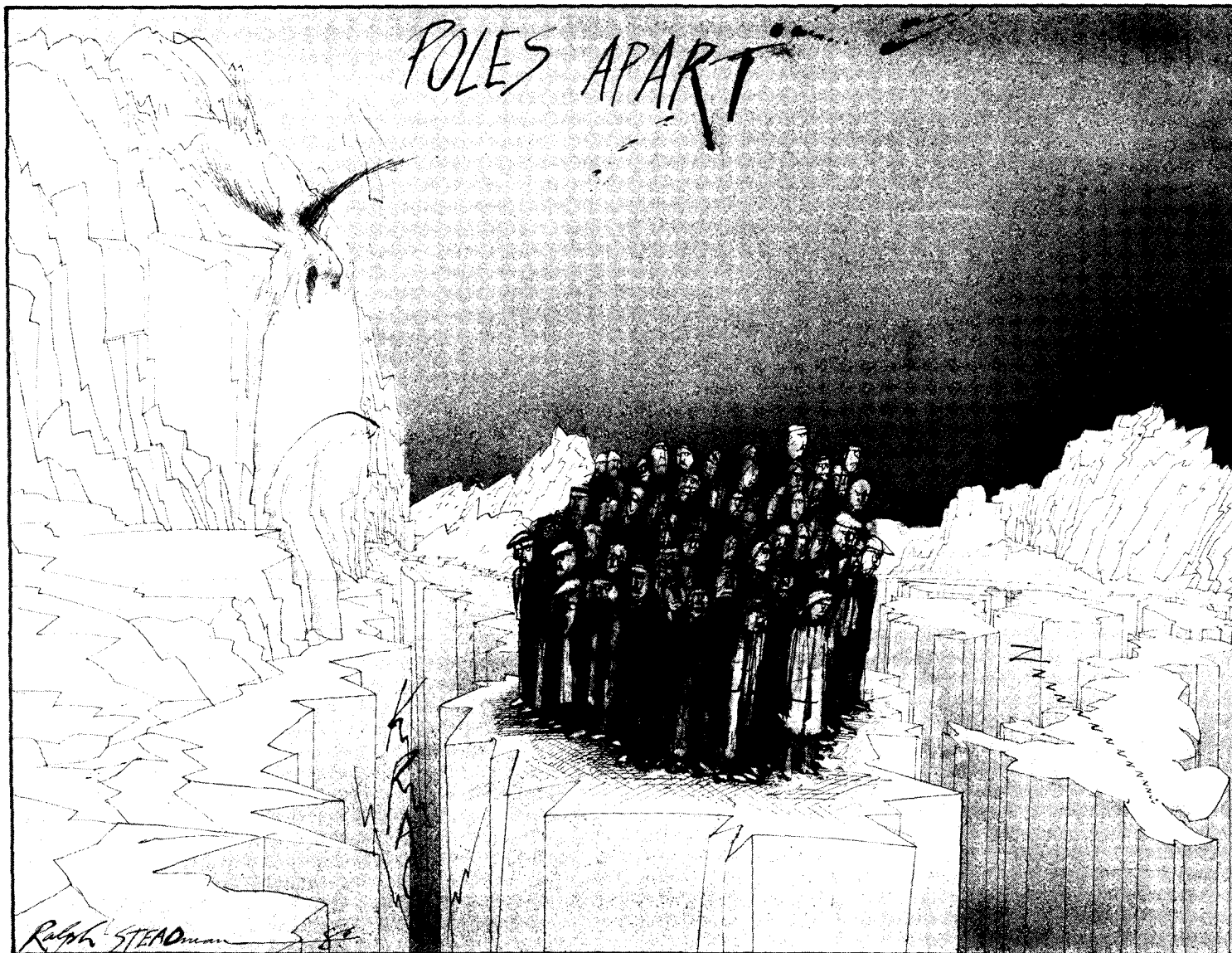
It is easy to make the mistake of assuming that there is no public opinion in Communist countries. But Polish workers do read the news and listen to the radio, and they do discuss what they hear. The large Polish community in Britain, and the many exchanges between the two countries at individual level, mean that the doings of the TUC will not go unnoticed. If tomorrow's Poland is a more open society for the working class, it would be pathetic for the TUC to have sat on its hands throughout. And if the worst happens, and the old system reimposes itself, it would be a disgrace for the TUC to have been lined up as the guests of the system. There is not much time left for that crucial sentence to be uttered.

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Ten years of the SDLP

Mary Holland writes: The continued existence of Northern Ireland's Social Democratic and Labour Party, which celebrated its tenth anniversary last week, is one of the more remarkable survival feats of contemporary politics. The party has only once tasted power, briefly (in the ill-fated Whitelaw executive of 1974), and for much of its life has had no political forum in which to present its policies or its politicians.

Of the rather mixed bag of seven members of the old Stormont who founded the party in 1970, two of the most popular, Gerry Fitt and Paddy Devlin, have resigned and one, Senator Paddy Wilson, was murdered by Protestant extremists. In its ten years of life the SDLP has also been the victim of swings of British government policy in Northern Ireland, and dissensions within its own ranks as to what its reaction to those policies should be. At times it has seemed that the combination of internal disagreements and outside pressures resulting from



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the continuing violence on the ground must lead to its breakup.

Yet despite these setbacks the party has continued to grow and to provide a strong, coherent political voice for Northern Ireland's Catholic minority. It is one of the ironies of the past decade that while the Unionist monolith has been irreparably fragmented, there has been no serious challenge to the SDLP's political claim to represent the Catholic community.

Two factors have helped, one of which the SDLP does not like to admit even to itself, let alone in public. While the Provisional IRA is still able to sustain a campaign of violence, no British government can afford to consign the political demands of the Catholic minority to the dustbin and, politically, it is the SDLP with which any Westminster government must negotiate.

But the fact that the SDLP is in this position is due in large part to its present leader, John Hume. In the party's darkest days after the fall of the power-sharing executive, and particularly when it seemed that the last Labour government would do any deal with the Unionists at Westminster to stay in power, it was Hume who understood the necessity of creating international pressures on Westminster not to forget the existence of the Catholic minority. He achieved this first by winning sympathy and support for his party in Europe, and then by building up a body of opinion among powerful Irish-American politicians (notably Tip O'Neill and Teddy Kennedy), which not even President Carter could afford to ignore.

Successive British administrations have always failed to realise how far the SDLP was prepared to move from the traditional nationalist and abstentionist posture of Catholic politics in Ulster, and to see its achievement in carrying its own community with it. In the early years, while retaining its long-term aspiration to a united Ireland, it was pre-

pared to work doggedly at devising some form of devolved government within the Northern Irish state. In recent years, as British governments have appeared to be leaning once again towards the Unionist majority, the nationalist strain within the party has been in the ascendancy, encouraged by Charles Haughey's republican posture in Dublin. The SDLP's insistence that any new British initiative for Northern Ireland must include an 'Irish dimension' is problematical for Mr Atkins, but he should realise that it is a demand which has been forced on it not simply by history but by more recent events, particularly the last government's record in Ireland.

Will public farms be the next victims of asset-stripping?

Barry Wilson writes: Cambridgeshire county land agent Alan Ashpole is no one's idea of a campaigning radical. He is usually seen as more of an old-fashioned (though nationalised) landlord. But he is now proving to be a vociferous defender of public ownership in his fight to stop the county council from selling many of its smallholding estates.

Two years ago the Cambridgeshire 'sellers' were narrowly defeated when they proposed to flog smallholdings. That, however, was before the new Thatcherite climate of council house sales and 'privatisation', and last month the county council voted to investigate how £15 million could be raised in three years from the sale of smallholdings. A final decision will be taken in November, but since Cambridgeshire has more smallholdings than any other county — over 1,200, covering 46,000 acres — its attitude has already begun to influence other agricultural counties. Norfolk, which has sold a few smallholdings in the last two years, has just decided

to raise another £3 million from sales, and Derbyshire voted last month to sell all its remaining holdings.

There are more than 8,000 county council smallholdings in Britain, covering 350,000 acres and worth well over £500 million, and their purpose has always been a social one. From the 1890s until the outbreak of the First World War they were aimed at relieving the depressed living conditions of farm labourers. After the war they were designed to help returned soldiers. More recently they have been seen as a way for newcomers without money to start in farming.

The sales will certainly not take place without a fight. Counties which have so far tried to sell some of their holdings have had to confront determined tenants, with the result that sales have been difficult and usually at a price far below the market value of the land. Norfolk county council officials privately admit that the amount of money raised has hardly been worth the trouble. Nevertheless, it is the sort of campaign to warm the hearts of Tory councillors through the coming winter.

'Networking' strikes at British publishing

Elaine Davenport writes: A group set up to challenge the 'traditional gentlemanly aura' in the book publishing trade has evoked a remarkable response. Farrell Burnett, of Burnett Books, whose telephone number is given for those seeking information about the group, Women in Publishing, reports that she receives 'dozens of calls from hesitant, scared sounding women who won't give their names but want to know if they can come to meetings'. On the second Monday of every month, some 60 to 80 women pack into the upstairs room of the Bedford Head pub in

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London's Maiden Lane. Some men in the male-dominated industry have begun to sense that a kind of women's underground is forming and have shown anxiety, if not hostility to WIP. There have even been incidents where women have been carpeted by male superiors and had their contracts discussed, after their involvement with WIP has become known within their firms.

Just over half the estimated 20,000 jobs in British book publishing are held by women. Most of these (as might be expected) are in copy preparation, secretarial and clerical work. Men, meanwhile, pervade the board rooms and the upper administrative, sales and editorial echelons.

'We wouldn't exist if women weren't getting the raw end of the deal in publishing', said one founder member. Helen Fraser, Fontana's non-fiction editor, remarks that a few women have become executive editors, but it could be ten years before they penetrate the board rooms in any numbers.

The secretarial workers themselves have been showing considerable interest in WIP, and Farrell Burnett comments that 'it is especially important for women just starting out to have contact with other women who have achieved a certain status in the profession.'

In fact, the idea of 'networking' received much attention at the recent Decade for Women conferences in Copenhagen. It refers to an informal communications system which allows women to exchange information and experiences; and a book on the subject has already been published in the United States. 'It's so nice to have other people to ring on an informal basis to solve problems and get practical answers', says Burnett.

French fishermen learn to stiffen the sinews

Jackie Fisher writes from Paris: British newspapers have had a high old time in the past fortnight, regaling their readers with patriotic tales of heroism from the Channel blockade. 'The spirit of Henry V at Agincourt triumphed again yesterday' was the opening sentence of the *Daily Mail* lead news story on 18 August. But while plucky holidaymakers were imitating the action of a tiger, hardly a word of explanation was given as to why the French fishermen were behaving so caddishly.

In the last five years the deficit in the French fishing industry has doubled to 3,000 million francs (about £300 million). The French government initially tried to solve the crisis by heavily subsidising oil prices for fishermen. More recently, however, while the British government gave its own fishing industry another £94 million in aid, the French were more cautious, offering subsidies to trawler owners on condition that they reduced crews and salaries. It was this that gave rise to the present conflict when, three weeks ago, Boulogne trawlermen claimed that they would have to reduce their crew numbers from 22 to 17 and cut salaries by 10 per cent in order to qualify for a subsidy.

Unsuccessful attempts to reach an agreement with the government caused the two main unions — the CGT and CFDT — to call for a blockade of ports, as the only way of drawing official attention to their claims. This action was soon supported by smaller fishermen from the Channel and Normandy ports, who wanted a chance to voice their own grievances about rising costs and high oil prices: a small fisherman working 16 hours a day can earn as little as £15 a week.

The depletion of coastal resources has aggravated the problem by forcing fishermen to travel further and thus to consume even more oil. A trip to the Azores could cost a trawler £500. Trawlermen have also had to invest in more sophisticated ultra-sonic equipment in order to fish in deeper waters.

The conflict is still unresolved, but the two unions have now gone their separate ways. The CGT, believing that a national solution is required, has refused to negotiate on a local level. The more accommodating CFDT has already reached several regional agreements with the government.



Tony Harpur

Anna Coote

Media unions back new campaign for the right of reply

THE LAUNCH THIS WEEK of a campaign for the right of reply by the union-backed Campaign for Press Freedom is bound to draw the fire of editors who fear any encroachment on their autonomy. The principle on which the campaign is based is a difficult one to fault: individuals and groups who have been the victims of serious distortion in a newspaper or magazine should have the right to present their case to readers, with a reasonable amount of space and prominence. What is new is that trade unionists in the newspaper industry are preparing to enforce that right where editors have refused to concede it.

The campaign organisers recognise that letters pages sometimes offer the right of reply, but point out that they are not always sufficient to counteract a major piece of news coverage which may have extended over many days.

The right of reply campaign has already gathered strong support in the labour movement, and is backed by leaders of the National Graphical Association, the National Union of Journalists, Sogat and Natsopa. Memories are still fresh of last year's 'winter of discontent', when newspapers consistently reported events from the employers' point of view, giving unions no more than an occasional paragraph in which to explain their position.

At next week's TUC in Brighton, a motion proposed by the NUJ calls for the right of reply, among other measures to extend access to the media and combat the prevailing right-wing bias in the press. All the major print unions are supporting the motion and if it is passed — as it almost certainly will be — it

Police chief tells officers to pull socks up

Judith Cook writes: The Head of Nottingham Traffic Police, Chief Inspector Philip Newton, has taken Mrs Thatcher's exhortations for higher productivity to heart. He wants to see an increase in the number of bookings made by his officers. In a confidential internal memorandum he complains that officers on traffic duty are not obtaining enough convictions and he urges his inspectors and sergeants to ensure, in future, that they do. Each officer should return a minimum of 20 offences a month, he says, and he ends with a stern warning that officers who do not show a minimum of at least 20 booked offences will be 'dealt with accordingly'. He will interview personally any officer whose monthly work return he considers to be 'inadequate'.

Chief Inspector Newton's memo has not gone down well with the Nottinghamshire Branch of the Police Federation, a spokesman for whom said the instruction was most 'unfortunate' as it could affect the judgment of officers dealing with offenders. Officers should be allowed to use their discretion, particularly with traffic offences, where a warning might be more appropriate. The Deputy Chief Constable, Tony Tyler, confirmed that the matter had been raised with the Provisional Commander through normal negotiating channels. Chief Inspector Newton was not available for comment. He was, said his office, 'away on a course'.

will mark a significant departure from the traditional union policy of non-interference in the editorial content of newspapers.

Once the new policy is established, it will be intriguing to see how, when and where it is enforced. Will the right of reply be restricted to trade unionists, when strikes or other industrial disputes have been unfairly reported? Or will it extend to feminist groups who have been ridiculed and misrepresented, homosexuals who have been harassed by the press, or blacks who have suffered from racist vendettas? The Campaign for Press Freedom is keen that the initiative should not be seen merely as an attempt by trade unionists to look after their own. On the other hand, it would obviously be impracticable to seek the right of reply for all individuals who thought they had been given a raw deal by the press.

Initially, the scope of the campaign is being restricted to issues already defined by the press as having national importance (or equivalent significance locally, where local papers are concerned). The idea is that cases of serious distortion, where the right of reply has been requested and refused, will become a 'matter of negotiation' between employer and unions. The Campaign for Press Freedom insists it is not in favour of 'blackening' copy, but wants a wider range of information and views to reach readers. In extreme cases, however, the union's ultimate sanction will be to withdraw labour.

In each newspaper, enforcement will inevitably depend on the strength of trade union organisation, and on the views of the trade unionists involved. Some of the best-organised chapels are known to be positively red-necked on issues such as immigration, homosexuality and women's liberation. However, the campaign's organisers maintain that if it succeed in involving trade unionists in discussion about media content, and starts them thinking about their responsibility for the printed word, then that will be a first step in the right direction.

Women are often given little choice but to be sterilised

Signing away their birth rights

DOREEN WELLS was lying semi-conscious in Ashford Hospital and was about to give birth to her third son when she was asked to sign a consent form for sterilisation. At the time she had been in labour for eighteen hours and was being treated with three powerful pain-killing drugs.

Dr Debi Sinha, who performed the sterilisation, has since claimed that he fully explained the nature of the operation and the fact that it was irreversible: 'The patient was exhausted by a long labour but was fully orientated and understood.' However, a consultant anaesthetist has testified that there is considerable evidence that at the time Mrs Wells was 'not in a fit state to make a considered decision'. Certainly the scrawled signature on the consent form is barely recognisable (see reproduction, right), and Mrs Wells insists that she had no idea that she was signing away her right to have further children.

Minutes after the doctor obtained her signature Mrs Wells was wheeled away to have a caesarian operation, followed by sterilisation. 'I didn't know that I had been sterilised until two days later when the ward sister made a joke about it,' says Mrs Wells. 'I was speechless. I am a Catholic, and to me sterilisation is unnatural. I would absolutely never have agreed.'

Afterwards Mrs Wells became very depressed. Her marriage suffered and she tried to commit suicide. She took the case to court and won £3,000 damages against her local health authority on the grounds that she had been given inadequate counselling. Even now, aged 44, she still wants another child, and has already had two unsuccessful operations to reverse the sterilisation.

About 100,000 women are sterilised in Britain every year. Almost half of them are sterilised at the same time as delivery or abortion. Although many of these women decide on the operation before entering hospital, an alarming number are 'talked into it' at the very last minute. Professor Peter Huntingford, an obstetrician at the London Hospital, has condemned this practice: 'This is the worst possible time to make such a vital decision. The woman is often under emotional distress, in poor physical condition and under the influence of powerful drugs.'

A woman must give her 'informed and valid consent' in writing before being sterilised. This means that the nature of the operation has to be fully explained, and in particular it must be stressed that it should be regarded as irreversible.

But a woman's informed consent is not always obtained. There are four major abuses. First, sterilisation is sometimes suggested by the doctor just before a woman is about to give birth or have an abortion. The patient is often exhausted, anxious, and on painkilling drugs: hardly the right conditions to make such a long lasting decision. Secondly, linguistic and cultural barriers can make it more difficult for doctors to provide proper counselling and obtain informed consent from immigrant women. Thirdly, doctors sometimes insist that as a condition of performing an abortion they do a sterilisation at the same time. Finally, in some isolated cases women have been sterilised without the doctor even telling them.

ASHFORD HOSPITAL (Middx.)
CONSENT FOR PRIMARY STERILIZATION
CONSENT BY PATIENT

I also consent to the administration of a general or local anesthetic

No assurance has been given to me that the operation will be performed by a particular surgeon.

D. Wells

Signed *DP Wells*

Doreen Wells's 'consent' for sterilisation and (left) her usual signature

THERE ARE surprisingly few statistics kept on the number and circumstances of female sterilisations. The most recent official figures, which were given to Parliament last month by Health minister Dr Gerard Vaughan, showed that 72,929 female sterilisations were performed by the NHS in England, Wales and Scotland in 1976. Of these 14 per cent were done with an abortion, and 26 per cent at the time of delivery.

Robert Winston, the country's leading expert on sterilisation reversal, estimates that there are now as many as 100,000 female sterilisations being performed each year. Certainly female sterilisation has become a popular method of contraception, and one recent sample has suggested that as many as 10 per cent of British females aged between 33 and 39 have had the operation.

The results of a recent survey in Birmingham suggest that women are five times more likely to regret being sterilised if the operation is performed at the same time as birth or abortion than if it is done on its own. Of 336 sterile Birmingham women who were contacted, 185 had been sterilised at the time of delivery or abortion — and a quarter of them regretted it later. But of the 146 women who had had sterilisation as an operation on its own, only five later expressed regret. The survey concluded: 'It is seldom necessary to perform sterilisation at the time of delivery or immediately after, and many patients would have benefited from more adequate counselling under less stressful conditions.'

Professor Huntingford believes that the paternalistic attitude of the medical profession is partly to blame for the sterilisation scandal: 'A woman is talked to by a doctor in a patronising way and told, "You've had three children and have had two abortions — wouldn't it be sensible to be sterilised?"' It also seems that some gynaecologists normally offer to sterilise a woman at the same time as a caesarian operation if she already has several children. Dr Selwyn Crawford of Birmingham Maternity Hospital has claimed that 'it was common practice in 1970, and even today is not infrequently the case, that an elderly patient having her third child (or more) and requiring to be delivered by emergency caesarian section was told, "As you are going to have this operation, why not let us sterilise you at the same time and save you trouble after?"'

For the hospital, there can be advantages in doing two operations at the same time and thus saving valuable bed space. But there are

no strong medical grounds for performing the sterilisation at the same time as delivery or abortion. Sterilisation done at the same time as delivery can occasionally make the operation less effective, and there is always the tragic possibility that the baby might die at birth. If the sterilisation is done at the same time as abortion, it can be marginally more dangerous than if the two operations are performed separately.

Sterilisation is one of the very few operations for which a doctor receives an extra payment from the NHS — £26.92 if it is done at the time of delivery or abortion, £40.30 if it is done on its own. The anaesthetist also stands to receive a special fee. These payments should be withdrawn, says Professor Huntingford, because 'this cash incentive is an avoidable motive for exerting unnecessary pressure.'

The doctors are only partly responsible for many cases where women later regret being sterilised. Susan was sterilised two years ago when she was 27. She had already had three children, and because her marriage was on the rocks she didn't want to become pregnant again. But when she went to All Saints Hospital, Chatham, she was given only ten minutes counselling by the doctor, and she claims she wasn't even asked about her marital situation.

Just two weeks after Susan was sterilised she met a new man — and they married several months later. Now she bitterly regrets that she is unable to give her new husband a child, and she has been advised that a reversal operation is unlikely to prove successful.

All Saints Hospital claim that they gave 'proper counselling which included full advice on the irreversibility of the operation'. And the fact that Susan's husband had also signed the consent form suggested to the doctor that there were no marital difficulties at home. But the hospital did acknowledge that the time given to counsel a woman for sterilisation was 'anything up to half an hour' — a rather short time to explain the physical and psychological effects of the operation, to inquire into a woman's family position and to answer any questions.

The vast majority of women who have been sterilised are happy with their decision. It has given them a new freedom, without the problems of other forms of contraception. The irony is that while some women are clearly sterilised without really wanting it, others who do want sterilisation are actually finding it difficult to obtain on the NHS.

Jerusalem's divisive 'unity'

AS ISRAEL IMPOSED 'UNITY' on the 100,000 Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem, Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Fahd declared a *Jihad* — holy war — in response. And as most of the few remaining foreign embassies moved from even the Western sector of the capital (Israel's since 1948) to Tel Aviv, an editor of the city's arabic daily *Al-Fajr* voiced a brave appeal to his Jewish neighbours: 'In the course of written history,' wrote Zia Abu Zayyad, in Hebrew, in the mass-circulation Jerusalem weekly *Kol Ha'ir*, 'the city has been destroyed 26 times — each time on account of its sanctity. These acts of destruction were carried out by those who loved the city, and wished to exercise that love.'

Criticising the former Jordanian regime for failing 'to take into account how important Jerusalem is to the Jews,' he continued:

I recognise the feelings of the Israeli, and constantly try to understand how important Jerusalem is for him. For his part, the Israeli must recognise my feelings, and endeavour to understand how important Jerusalem is for me. If he does so, he will realise that he cannot keep the city for himself while denying others' claims to it.

Meron Benvenisti, a former deputy mayor of the city, expresses a similar attitude: 'If the Arabs say they feel a strong attachment to Jerusalem, we must believe them. It is not for us to judge.' He does not expect the Arabs to accept occupation under any conditions, and thinks a solution will only come as a last step of an overall settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

'Meanwhile, we should adopt whatever policies are necessary, even unilaterally, to improve the lot of Jerusalem Arabs as human beings, and should not take any political steps that are seen as closing off options for the future, making the Arabs feel that their presence here is insecure.'

But Benvenisti today is in a distinct minority among Jewish Jerusalem. For most Israelis, emotional attachment to parts of the city cut off from them between 1948 and the 1967 war combines with ignorance about Palestinian identity and political aims, to justify support of 'unity'. And 'unity' is defined as annexation along borders drawn soon after the Six-Day War to include not only holy and historic sites, but also more mundane geographical features such as strategic hills and an airfield kilometres north of the nearest pre-1967 Jewish neighbourhood.

Even a leader of the doveish Peace Now movement, in a recent private conversation among friends, advocated return of all the occupied territories 'except Jerusalem.' He explained: 'I admit to being irrational on this question, but I insist that Jerusalem remain united' — failing to question whether real 'unity' could be imposed on one population by another.

AS FAR AS official Israel is concerned, such unity is now an accomplished fact. Israeli law was extended to the enlarged city by administrative decree thirteen years ago, and to dispel any lingering doubts, Parliament voted 69 to 15 last month for a 'basic law' declaring 'Jerusalem, complete and united, the capital of Israel.'

Many of those who voted in favour openly expressed doubts about the timing of the law,

which was tabled by extreme rightist Geula Cohen, who openly hoped to disrupt the already nearly stalemated autonomy talks with Egypt. But they had no qualms about the content of the law; nor did the handful of Labour deputies who abstained or stayed away from the vote. Nor even did most of those who risked suspicion of being 'soft on Jerusalem' by actually voting against the bill.

Besides the declarative opening, there is not really much to the law itself. It goes on to require that high state institutions be located in the city — most already are — and concludes with a few generally phrased sentences about freedom of access to holy places and special state responsibility for developing the city and looking after the well-being of its residents. Unlike some 'basic laws,' meant to comprise a future constitution, it does not include a 'protection clause' making its repeal contingent on a larger than normal majority. Any future Israeli government willing to restore Arab sovereignty to East Jerusalem would have no trouble disposing of the new law.

However, important physical and demographic changes have occurred in 13 years of Israeli rule over East Jerusalem. New Jewish suburbs ring the city. Unlike the rest of the occupied territories, where the settler population barely reaches over one per cent of the whole, in Jerusalem nearly as many Jews live across the former border as there are Arabs in the same area. The city's infrastructure — roads, water supply, electricity — has been consciously planned to erase the 1948-67 division. A large Israeli industrial park, the national police headquarters and the Justice Ministry are all in East Jerusalem.

IN ANOTHER controversial move, Prime Minister Menahem Begin plans to transfer his bureau across town to a new government complex. Abba Eban and other Labour leaders have been noting that the very act of moving the Prime Minister's office indicates doubts as to Jerusalem's real unity. On these grounds, they oppose the transfer, but most Labour deputies avoid the reality behind the argument. Jerusalem is very much divided in one important sphere: Jews and Arabs do not live together, study together, play together or in most cases, speak the same language. Social contact is rarely more than superficial, and usually class-defined (Jewish employer/Arab worker, or shopper/merchant in either direction).

Public services, even those supplied by the relatively liberal municipality, are grossly unequal; and development since 1967 has been strongly weighted in favour of projects for Jews. East Jerusalem architect Ibrahim Dakak, considered a central figure in Palestinian politics, says three- and four-year waits for building permits are normal, and strict size limits are imposed on his plans, while projects for Jews on adjoining sites are allowed much higher density and are often completed before a licence is finalised. He adds that more than 25,000 dunams of land within the city boundaries have been expropriated from Arab owners and used, together with other 'state-owned' land, for Jewish neighbourhoods.

In a way, Israeli-style unity — separate and unequal — has been facilitated by the fact that

East Jerusalem Arabs do not want integration into Jerusalem, nor equal services from Teddy Kollek's city hall. Rather, they see their fate as inextricably linked to that of the West Bank. East Jerusalem serves as a centre for the region, geographically, economically, politically and culturally. Its Arab residents have, almost without exception, refused Israeli citizenship. During the recent unrest in the West Bank, Jerusalem was in the forefront as far as demonstrations and commercial strikes were concerned.

Israeli negotiators have been adamant in their absolute refusal to allow East Jerusalemites to participate in elections for the proposed West Bank autonomy council (if they ever take place). On the other hand Israel insists that autonomy will somehow apply only to people, not geographically defined territory.

Camp David was based on an agreement to disagree over Jerusalem: an assumption, probably correct, that if accord were reached on all other problems, Jerusalem would not prove a stumbling block. Now, by pursuing its plans for maintaining absolute rule over East Jerusalem, Israel seems to have harmed the likelihood of reaching any agreement at all with Egypt over autonomy. This was the extreme Right's aim. Begin may have preferred otherwise, but the hullabaloo over Jerusalem seems to indicate a conclusion on his part that the talks were going nowhere anyway. If so, then why not exploit America's inability to slap Israel's wrists very hard during an election campaign to embarrass Egypt? Nor does Begin's hard line on Jerusalem run the risk of losing support at home, an affliction he suffered several times in the past when it looked as if the peace process was slowing down. 'Redivision of Jerusalem' has proved to be a very useful bogeyman to stifle debate, both in and out of Parliament.

Nearly forgotten here in Israel is the fact that neither Sadat nor more militant Arabs are necessarily advocating a return to the pre-1967 arrangement, when barbed wire was strung across the city. Abu Zayyad, who says unabashedly that the PLO is his political representative, has another idea: 'I believe that Israeli recognition of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination, including the right to establish a state whose capital would be East Jerusalem — with arrangements which would guarantee that Jerusalem remains a single, united city — is an essential step . . . (and) could break the cycle of destruction. Without it, Jerusalem cannot be called united. The truth is that to this very day, Jerusalem is not a united city.'

Jerusalem

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The creation of an industrial desert

Tory economics this week took unemployment to two million. One of the most worrying trends is the collapse of Britain's manufacturing centre in the West Midlands, where 212,000 are out of work — 9 per cent of the region's working population. **PATRICK WINTOUR** reports.

MRS THATCHER is said to be a warrior, not a healer — and if that is so, her current centre of operations must be the West Midlands. For it is here, according to her Industry Minister Adam Butler, that a new British industry 'will emerge at the end, in a slimmer and fitter state to compete'. If the timing goes wrong, or if the strategy fails altogether, the Prime Minister will probably not be granted a second term: the 90-odd seats in the Midlands tend to decide general elections.

So far it seems that the first part of the Tory strategy — disciplining the unions — is working adequately well. The aim is not just to reduce wages or restructure capital through closures, but also to limit the self-assurance of working people and to restrict their control over the operations of the companies where they work. Few unions or shops stewards' committees seem capable of mounting any real resistance to this kind of attack.

However, the second part of the strategy — conjuring a new manufacturing base out the West Midlands — seems a long way off target. Indeed, there is mounting evidence that the region is now locked into irreversible decline.

Unemployment in the West Midlands will rise at nearly double the national rate between now and 1985, according to the University of Warwick's Manpower Research Group. The Department of Applied Economics at Cambridge is a little gloomier. It predicts that the West Midlands, which was once the most prosperous region in the country after the South East, will have an unemployment rate of 13.7 per cent within three years, surpassing Scotland and the North and leaving only Northern Ireland and Wales in a worse position. This is an astonishing collapse for an area which once enjoyed earnings 10 per cent above the national average and nil unemployment.

This month, unemployment in the West Midlands was 9 per cent, and earnings were 3 per cent below the national average. In the last ten years, female unemployment in the region



Workers picket outside Dartmouth Autocasting's No 2 plant which is threatened with closure.

Derek Bickton

has risen by a phenomenal 570 per cent. Matters would have been a lot worse had there not been an unusually small number of new entrants into the labour market. But this, too, is expected to change: the Manpower Services Commission estimates that between 1976 and 1991 up to a quarter of a million new workers will enter the labour market in the West Midlands. (The net gain in jobs between 1971 and 1978 has only been 850 a year.)

No-one can say that central government hasn't been adequately warned. Phil Higgs, convenor at Rolls Royce Coventry and a senior figure in the regional TUC, says: 'It makes you a bit cynical to see the Labour Party getting concerned about the area now and having debates about us in parliament. The regional TUC had been trying to see Callaghan about the decline in the area since 1978. He refused. We got to see some employment ministers and they told us we wouldn't get anywhere because of the strength of the Welsh and Merseyside lobbies.'

At the time of the Heath government, the West Midlands regional planning authorities identified a structural decline — and even published their views in a document entitled *A Time for Action*. The response since then has been painfully slow. Even now, the region gets a poor share of public expenditure and suffers a net tax loss.

SO THE CURRENT RECESSION is compounding problems which have accumulated over many years. Even employers are complaining: 'A turnaround cannot be expected until next year', says John Warburton of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce. 'While understanding the need for monetary policy, we would like to see a fall in the exchange rate and a cut in interest rates. We never thought interest rates would stay this high so long.'

If employers are aware of the damage being done to them in the long term, they are not slow to reap short-term benefits — by keeping wages right down. The West Midlands CBI claims that pay settlements have fallen to between seven and ten per cent. Ernie Hunt, Birmingham South district organiser for the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, agrees that pay settlements are running low;

never in 20 years of union activity has he seen the local economy in such a terrible state. Phil Higgs from Coventry adds: 'Workers aren't fools. When they know their company is over-producing they know they could be on strike for a long time. And if at home they have a young unemployed school leaver, or a wife or husband who has lost their job, it all goes to create a climate.'

Chastened shop stewards at British Leyland have put in for a 20 per cent rise, but expect much less. They are backing down over the new agreement on working practices which the management has forced through, and the number of disputes over the last year is down by a third. Everyone who moves from one BL job to another is being given a new contract which says that no employee is allowed to disclose information about the company without permission. The Longbridge works committee has been warned not to give adverse reports on the new Mini Metro. Senior members of the combine have also been warned for attending a recent unofficial meeting on the pay claim.

Talbot workers have accepted a 15 per cent pay rise over 18 months; and last year, as the car recession began, they lost an 11-week strike, ending up with only 5.5 per cent. At Lucas, workers are likely to accept a 10 per cent national offer, even though some divisions — notably aerospace — are still making substantial profits. The Engineering Employers' Federation, which negotiates with a wide range of companies, is making a low offer this year and the AUEW is unlikely to resist it after spending so much of its dispute money on the steel strike earlier in the year.

Trade unionists who try to swim against the stream are tending to get washed away. At Birmingham's Metro Camel plant, for instance, electricians put in for a 20 per cent rise and were promptly sacked. After negotiation the company refused to reinstate the ten it regarded as ring leaders.

A similar fate befell 700 workers at Birmetals in Smethwick, who were sacked in June after putting in a pay claim. Mrs Thatcher herself drew attention to the case in an ITN interview last month. She claimed workers at Birmetals (which makes aluminium



alloys) had priced themselves out of a job, winning a pay rise of 15 per cent last August and then asking for 20 per cent more in March. Such 'self-inflicted unemployment', the Prime Minister said, was 'ridiculous'. However, the facts do not quite fit the picture she was trying to paint. In August last year, the Birmetals workforce won a 12 per cent increase and an agreement from the company to reopen negotiations the following March. The parent company, Birmid Qualcast, has recently quadrupled its profits (admittedly from a low base); yet it has since been closing down plants all over Birmingham. In May, it shut Midland Motor Cylinders, with 300 job losses; in July Dartmouth Autocastings No 1 plant, with 660 job losses; and now it wants to shut Dartmouth's No 2 foundry, slashing another 450 jobs. Shortly before the sackings at Birmetals, the company was holding discussions with the local council about expanding onto an adjacent site, with more factory units and houses — which suggests it cannot have been short of money. Now there is a 24-hour picket at the gates as part of a bid to reclaim the 700 jobs. But that kind of experience is bound to unnerve other workers who are drawing up their annual pay claims.

COVENTRY, which stood at the centre of the post-war industrial boom, has been particularly badly hit, with unemployment now at 9.9 per cent. The arrival of the Daimler in 1896 made Coventry the birthplace of the British car industry and today more than a third of the jobs in the city are still linked with car manufacture. Indeed, it is more heavily dependent on a single industry than any other large town in the country.

This week sees the end of car assembly at Canley, Coventry, where only two years ago the workforce was 9,000 strong. The first group of white-collar workers to be made redundant by BL will be in Coventry — at the Brown's Lane Jaguar plant. Thousands of Talbot workers are on a one-day week at Ryton and Stoke. Renolds Chain, the Coventry car component manufacturers, have sacked 700 — many of whose parents and grandparents worked for the company.

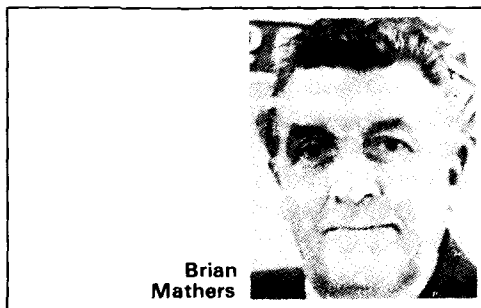
Alfred Herbert, the NEB-backed machine tool firm which has already suffered heavy redundancies, is to lose a further 700 jobs, leaving no more than 250 workers. According to convenor Ron Doughty, the company has the best computerised numerically controlled lathes in the country: 'The government keeps harping on about supporting high technology, yet Sir Keith Joseph will not even come to see us.' He is particularly bitter about the NEB reneging on the union's severance agreement. 'If the company kept to their agreement, men who have worked here over 40 years should be getting £8,000; instead they will only get £4,000.'

At Banner Lane, Coventry, Massey Ferguson announced this month that a fall in demand for farm machinery would mean the end of 680 jobs. This came only months after the company had secured a productivity deal from the unions, promising as part of the deal, with great fanfare, that it would support the new programme with orders. In 1978, when more than 800 jobs were lost at Banner Lane, more than 1,500 volunteered for redundancy; it is a sign of the times that nowhere near as many are expected to come forward for this round.

AUEW's Ernie Hunt paints a similar pic-

ture of Birmingham as he reads out the list of firms contracting or closing down plants in the city: Lucas electrical division, Triplex, Rubery Owen, Dunlop, Cadbury, GKN Sankey, GKN forges, Delta Metals, Wilmot Breedon, Associated Engineering, Tube Investments. . . and he thinks matters will get worse. Eight hundred West Midlands firms are making use of the government's compensation scheme for short-time work: the compensation lasts for 26 weeks, as a temporary stop-gap before redundancy. Says Hunt: 'It is inevitable that bigger redundancies are still in store.' The full extent of the engineering crisis will be more easily measured in three months' time, when companies publish their half-yearly results.

LOCAL TRADE UNIONISTS are divided in their reactions to redundancy. At their quarterly meeting in June, AUEW shop stewards' committees from Birmingham South and West called for a city-wide meeting of all the union's shop stewards to be held during working hours, in order to discuss joint action on unemployment. But two weeks ago, the national executive of the AUEW banned the scheme. Their reasons, listed in a letter to the shop stewards, revealed a lot about the union. First, the executive said they could not



approve a work-time meeting because of the dangers it could pose for stewards in less well-organised factories; second, quarterly meetings of shop stewards had no power to order such a meeting; and third, the executive could not carry the cost. The shop stewards had wanted a work-time conference to combat declining attendance at ordinary meetings and the conspicuous lack of any local co-ordinated fight against redundancies.

The engineers' union is notoriously demoralised, so its reaction cannot be taken as typical. Brian Mathers, regional organiser of the Transport and General Workers' Union, plans a conference on unemployment in October — late in the day, but better than nothing. And there are signs that unions fighting job losses will be less likely in future to have to contend with workers willing to snap up redundancy money. In large firms in the past there have usually been sufficient numbers who are sick or near retirement and therefore easily paid off (often with a sum larger than they have ever seen in their lives). Lucas electrical division in Birmingham has asked for 2,600 volunteers for redundancy by next month, but according to T&G convenor John Byrne, it is still short of 900. 'Birmingham has become like Liverpool. People are suddenly realising there is nowhere else to go.'

His union commissioned an independent stockbrokers' report on Lucas which predicted a £55 million profit in 1980-81. Says Byrne: 'The company told us that was peanuts and they might as well put their money in a building society. Last week we saw the deputy chairman. We asked him whether the workers

could be put on short time working until there is an upturn in the car market. He said there was no chance and there would be no upturn until the autumn of 1981.' The joint shop stewards' committee is worried that Lucas may not be committed to continuing production in Britain. T&G official Bill Goulding, who deals with Lucas, concurs: 'I'm being rather jingoistic about it. Lucas should think about closing factories outside Britain, but they continue investing in plants in South Korea, Argentina, South Carolina and France.' In 1970 UK sales and exports were 71.8 per cent of total Lucas sales; now, as Lucas moves abroad, they are only 55 per cent.

Most of the car component industry, which has accounted for about 5 per cent of the region's employment, is shifting activity abroad. This is hardly surprising since stockbrokers such as Phillips and Drew are predicting that UK car sales will drop from one million to 700,000 in 1985. At GKN, for instance, 40 per cent of profit is now made abroad; in 1975, 82 per cent of its capital spending was in the UK, but this is now down to 61 per cent. Similarly Wilmot Breedon, now owned by the American firm Rockwell, is investing heavily in Europe where it makes more than half its £70m car component sales.

HOW HAS THE West Midlands got into such a desperate mess? Much of the evidence suggests that the West Midlands has been blighted precisely because it is Britain's manufacturing heartland. There is a well documented trend, best shown in America, of service industries taking over from manufacturing. While the UK national manufacturing share of employment is 31 per cent, in the West Midlands it is 44 per cent, the highest figure of any region in Britain. Moreover, the West Midlands is disproportionately dependent on five major manufacturing sectors — vehicles, metal goods, metal manufacture, mechanical engineering and electrical engineering. These sectors account for 68 per cent of manufacturing output in the region compared with 45 per cent nationally. Between 1965-77 158,000 jobs have been lost throughout the country in metal manufacturing (where the West Midlands has 24 per cent of all employment); 47,000 jobs have been lost in vehicles (in which the West Midlands has 33 per cent of the jobs); and 65,000 jobs have gone in metal goods (in which West Midlands has 31 per cent of the jobs). The West Midlands, particularly the conurbations, has been caught in historically outmoded industries.

But the matter is more complex than that. The West Midlands, our much-touted manufacturing base, is apparently not very efficient at manufacturing. It is not only less productive than Britain's international competitors (which is hardly news) but it is also less productive than the rest of the country. There were hints of this as far back as the late Sixties, but only in recent years have the statistics become sufficiently reliable for academics to be sure of their analysis.

Among others, John Mawson and Barbara Smith of the University of Birmingham have been looking at the problem. They show that with the exception of Northern Ireland, the regions which have received government grants and subsidies tend to have a higher net output per employee. The West Midlands, which has never been designated an assistance area by government, ranks bottom of the 11

UK regions in output per employee — and has done so regularly between 1973 and 1976 (the last year for which figures are available).

Smith and Mawson have broken down these figures for 15 individual manufacturing industries and constructed a league table over the years of efficiency for the regions. In their words, the 'West Midlands was on its own in a uniquely poor position'. Fifty four per cent of its net output figures were ranked eighth or lower in the table and only 18 per cent came in the first four.

Many people have blamed the West Midlands' failing on a regional development policy which for too long has characterised the area as exceptionally prosperous and strong. The lack of employment subsidies and investment grants has been blamed, along with restrictions on new industrial developments, for driving efficient or expanding firms out, or splitting them up. Some of that criticism is misplaced. Peter Tyler of the Centre for Environmental Studies has shown that only 39,000 jobs left the region as a direct result of regional policy, and claims that most of them were replaced anyway (leaving, in other words, a national net gain). No new industrial development certificates have been refused in the region since 1975.

Nevertheless it is possible that while dynamic concerns have moved out, more inefficient and stagnant firms have been left behind. And earlier restrictions on industrial development certificates may have adversely effected Birmingham's factory stock. A survey carried out by Aston University and published this year (the first of its kind) shows that half the industrial buildings in the Birmingham area date from before the first world war. About two-thirds of the buildings are on sites so cramped that there is no room for expansion. The lay-out of these mainly multi-storey factories is cited as one possible explanation for the comparative inefficiency of the region and for the inner city decline caused by firms moving out to expand.

Adverse regional policy has certainly brought a lower level of investment to the West Midlands than elsewhere (investment in government assisted areas has been substantially higher). The West Midlands' share of investment in manufacturing fell from 12.9 per cent to 9.8 per cent between 1963 and 1974. Between 1971 and 1975, while manufacturing investment in money terms rose by 60 per cent throughout the UK, it increased by only 40 per cent in the West Midlands. The assisted areas received in 1970-

79 more than over £1,000 per manufacturing employee in regional development grants and 'Section 7' assistance under the Industry Act. The West Midlands, not being an assisted area, received virtually nothing, except money through assistance to individual industries, worth about £50 per head, in schemes which have now been wound up.

Over the last two years, the West Midlands local authorities have been battling with central government over updating the West Midlands 1974 regional strategy. Both sides agreed over the space problem for factories, but the central government representatives steadfastly refused to consider a strategy which went beyond the purely physical aspects of planning (such as which factory should go where). No talk of intervention, either through subsidies or more aggressive land use, was allowed. In the end, the regional authorities produced a separate document without support from central government, calling for a more interventionist policy and emphasising that the region's economic problems were 'not a passing difficulty which will be solved by the operation of a business cycle'. It is doubtful whether the Tories have yet taken the warning or whether the unions are equipped to force them to do so.

Gitta Sereny

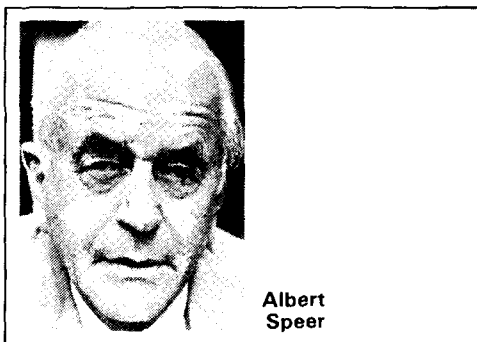
BBC condones distorted history

A FORTNIGHT AGO the BBC gave listeners two cracks at Jonathan Smith's radio play about Albert Speer, *A World Walk*. They must have felt it was pretty good. Many people listened to it, apparently, and afterwards the *Daily Telegraph* said it made 'enthraling listening'. When I heard the play, however, I wondered how deeply the playwright had read the book on which he based it, Speer's *Spandau — The Secret Diaries*. I asked myself whether the actor who made him so maudlin and theatrical — which, in real life, Speer is not — had ever leafed through its pages. And I wondered what listeners would gain from such a play.

Speer's diaries provide a graphic account, over a period of twenty years, of his personal battle for moral salvation, together with equally revelatory descriptions of the six men who shared his imprisonment at Spandau — Walter Funk, Admiral Raeder, Hess, von Schirach, von Neurath and Dönitz. The diaries also give us an extraordinary insight into the psychological effects of long-term confinement.

I accept that a play, in a different sense from a book, requires confrontation and recognisable protagonists. But does this justify the playwright's choice of an orderly, Anton Vlaer (in reality, in Speer's book, a young man compassionate to all the prisoners and devoted to Speer), as the mouthpiece through whom to challenge Speer's morality? Such a confrontation *could* have happened, of course: Speer always was and still is a mixture of arrogance and humility, and had he been challenged by someone such as Vlaer he would have accepted the challenge as an obligation, part of his penalty.

It could have happened. But it didn't. What did happen, and is described time and again in the book, is far more dramatic, although more



Albert Speer

complex to describe. For what actually provided the background to so many of Speer's bitter challenges to himself was the interplay of emotions and reactions between the seven prisoners. Dönitz's contempt, von Schirach's cantankerousness, von Neurath's detached courtesy, Hess's obsessiveness — none of this was indicated in the play, which barely touched on most of these characters and which totally misrepresented Hess and his relationship with Speer. On one occasion the playwright has Speer tell a giggling Rudolf Hess about his 'plan' — in reality no more than a daydream — to assassinate Hitler. It is inconceivable that Speer, knowing Hess's enduring devotion to Hitler, would have told him of such thoughts.

History has never been served by caricaturing or falsifying the characters and motives of those who make it. In Jonathan Smith's play a cockney soldier crudely interrogates Speer; others mock; still others mutter disapproval and distrust. There was, of course, ample cause for such reactions, but the fascinating thing is that the many soldiers who guarded Speer over the years hardly ever behaved in this way: Speer records in his books numerous acts of kindness from them, and explains how these too had a part in his search for redemption. Would one not think that this would offer more dramatic potential than stereotyped aggression from stereotyped soldiers?

Jonathan Smith was obviously intrigued by Speer's desire to achieve the equivalent of a walk round the globe by the time he was released. But he made it sound as if this was

Speer's principal activity at Spandau, whereas in truth it was merely the light relief among a series of meticulously planned disciplines. He read thousands of books, in several languages. He taught himself fairly fluent English and gave himself a second university education ('My first *real* education,' he told me) several times over. All this provided fuel with which he fired his examination of conscience.

It seems extraordinary that for three and a half decades we have been deploring the fact that hardly any Germans have been prepared to admit their allegiance to the Nazis and their guilt, yet we cannot accept the integrity of the one man who, from the very start in 1945, has been determined to acknowledge both. This is why a play such as this assumes an importance beyond its station, for it raises again a crucial question: should books, films, plays and journalism try to make history more 'easily digestible', or should we trust the intelligence of average people by giving them the truth?

When *Holocaust* was first shown many of us deplored its quality, but the phenomenal reception it had, above all in Germany, seemed to vindicate the film's makers. Yet today, a year and a half later, it is virtually impossible in Germany to publish a book or make a film on the Nazis, and a recent opinion poll in Hamburg found that the number of people wanting an end to prosecution of Nazi criminals had *risen* by more than 15 per cent since the film was shown. *Holocaust* had a spectacular effect not because it was a good film but because it was deliberately made bearable. Its manipulated history and prettified characters offered an easy way out to millions who had felt vaguely guilty for their own resistance to the subject. Spectators spoke of crying as they watched, but those were the kind of tears shed for the vagaries of the Waltons or J. R. Ewing. Hollow and stereotyped drama produces hollow, stereotyped and, above all, short-lived reactions. The true horrors of our time defy the easy relief of tears, but if we are allowed to learn about them they become imprinted on our hearts and minds, to affect our actions and our lives henceforth.

Okay, so where's the glue?

No one can seriously claim that the Left in Britain is in a healthy state. Neither the Labour Party nor the trade union movement seems able to mount an effective challenge to the Tories. Both are frequently accused of being overburdened with formal structure and out-of-touch with the lives of ordinary people. Smaller parties to the left of Labour offer little hope of a viable alternative. *Beyond the Fragments*, written by three feminists, Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright, has caused a considerable stir by suggesting that the Left has a lot to learn from the politics of the women's movement. **SHEILA ROWBOTHAM** reports on developments since the book's publication.

IT ALL BEGAN with a duplicated paper, circulated to members of the Islington and Newcastle socialist centres, which summarised talks given there by Lynne Segal and myself. But it then displayed an alarming tendency to grow. The duplicated paper turned into a fat pamphlet, which became a book published by Merlin Press. The book in turn generated meetings all over the country. The meetings helped to bring together a planning group and the people in this contacted others. Since there is no existing network for communication between the innumerable radical groups which are active locally or in particular campaigns and movements, we decided on this ad hoc basis to call a conference/event on Saturday 30 August at Leeds University.

The planning group has brought together people involved in a wide range of activities — from the anti-nuclear movement, the trade unions, radical co-ops, socialist centres, and tenants and housing groups, to feminist groups, the child care campaign, left papers, left film groups, the Workers' Education Association and the Worker Writers' Federation . . . the list could go on. The majority do not belong to political organisations, although members of the Labour Party, the Communist Party and Big Flame have been closely involved, and members of the International Marxist Group, the Socialist Workers' Party and other smaller groups have given help and support.

The idea is to spend the first half of the conference looking at the particular experiences of movements and campaigns: so there will be sessions on child care, the defence and control of the welfare state, racism, radical culture, education, the media, trade unions, unemployment and socially useful production, sexual politics, the anti-nuclear movement, and workers' control over strategy. It is hoped that we can devise ways of making links between all these, and begin to see how a wider vision of socialism could develop from the experience which has accumulated within them. In the afternoon, all the workshops will concentrate on how we can associate and make our diverse forms of activity more coherent. There will also be workshops, entertainments and games for children of all ages, as well as a creche for under-fives.

WHEN WE WROTE *Beyond the Fragments*, we thought we might stimulate other people to draw on their experience of action to develop ideas about political organisation. We realised that by criticising aspects of existing left groups, we would upset and annoy some socialists. But there had been private mutterings for so long that we felt they needed airing. As it turned out, the controversy and enthusiasm our initiative stirred took us by surprise. It was obviously not just a matter of what we had written, but a deeply felt need on the Left for free and frank discussion about how we see socialism; how people, ideas and feelings change; how we can associate without denying the reality of conflicts and differences; and how we can combine without losing our roots in local struggles.

The basic argument in our book is that socialist theory of organising needs to be much more closely related to the understandings and insights which have developed in the living politics of radical movements. To show how we had reached the ideas we now hold, we each drew upon our personal experiences of



politics. This is something we learned to do in the consciousness-raising groups of the women's movement; and it questions the assertion that *ideas* are the source of authority — an assertion which prevails in many sections of the Left and which can always justify the dismissal of personal experience.

We had found, too, that when we came home from our consciousness-raising groups, or when we went off to other conferences and meetings, we had to contest innumerable apparently trivial details of everyday life — from who did the shopping, to the use of language and laughter. Our ideas developed out of the experience of such contestations, and we thus acquired the habit of always asking what is behind the apparently trivial, and what are the general connections between the particular incidents we encounter. For example, the phrase: 'They're nothing but a load of old women' expresses a loathing for women who are no longer the objects of sexual desire, which is one aspect of male culture; it is tinged with fear, which is another. It reflects also capitalism's dismissal of human beings who can no longer be consumed for profit.

The longing for a free sense of oneself is not of course miraculously assuaged by becoming a feminist. However, once there is a movement, it becomes possible to challenge unequal power in relationships, and values which have the complacent sanction of always having held

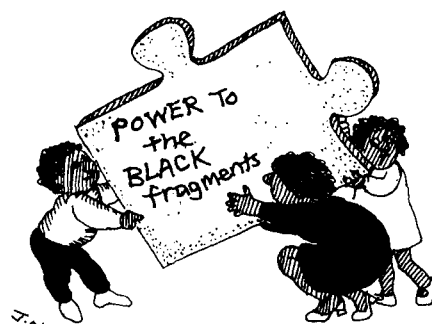


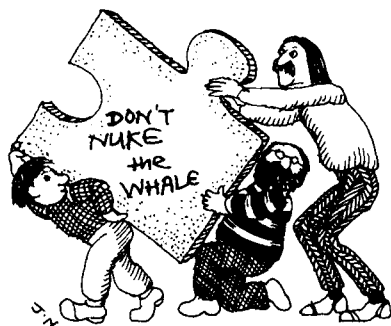
sway. Contemporary feminism has not just demanded particular reforms, but has pursued the sources of oppressive relationships; it has recognised that we must change not only the material circumstances of life, but also our attitudes and behaviour.

The search for new values and culture in the process of resistance is not something which is entirely new. But it has been specifically rejected within the revolutionary tradition under the influence of the Bolsheviks. It is therefore not surprising that a persistent source of argument between the women's movement and the Leninist left has been feminists' insistence that we must have changes now. For women will no longer allow their demands about sharing child care and housework or their challenges to sexual conventions to be reserved for abstract utopias.

In *Beyond the Fragments*, we wanted to assert the achievements of the women's movement without pretending all the answers for everyone were sitting intact in feminism. If you abandon self-criticism you close up. We wanted to open out our own discussions and experience and learn from others. For example, Hilary Wainwright described the concern among workers at Lucas Aerospace to make things that would be useful to people. They began to realise the skill, creativity and imagination they possessed in the process of discovering they could meet other people's needs. But if workers did this in any numbers, it would be an enormous challenge to the power of employers and indeed to the whole way in which decisions about what to produce are made in capitalism.

Through this and many other kinds of struggle it is possible to glimpse the need for a new vision of socialism. And this vision isn't just about having more, changing property relations or achieving control over work — for there are evidently other kinds of inequality and power in society. The transformation of





relationships must extend beyond class — to the relations between the sexes and races, and to other things such as power over information and communication. . .

‘RIGHT!’ SAID SOME of our critics. ‘Enough of your glimpses. You’ve knocked the Leninist groups, told us the women’s movement has not got all the answers, had a go at Euro-communism and the Labour Party along the way and left us with a ramshackle lot of women, community activists, rank and file workers, oppressed ethnic groups, alternative technologists, opponents of nuclear weapons, ecologists and the rest. Where’s the glue?’ Other critics pointed out that in our preoccupation with small Leninist groups and libertarian marxism we had ignored the Labour Party and the labour movement generally, and indeed the real economic and social changes in capitalism which had begun to force discussions on the Left.

In response we began to discuss (in the revised version which Merlin Press published) the dilemmas of the Labour left and the search among many workers for new strategies in the face of the intensified discipline of labour, cuts in welfare and rising prices. Our first edition had been written with a Labour government in power, the second just after the Tories got in. The effect of a militant right-wing government has made me feel more strongly than ever the need for connection with people from other areas of the Left and the trade union movement. I know from the meetings and discussions which have followed from the book that this is a widespread response.

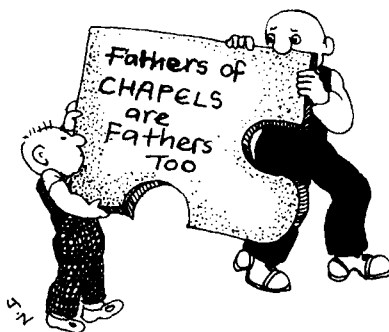
Some feminists have expressed a very real fear that this urgency will merely land us with a new version of the old problem in the socialist movement, again dissolving the particular into the general. It would negate the fierce struggle for autonomy which has characterised the women’s movement, and which has challenged the assumption that Parties always have an understanding superior to that of the parts. Feminists have shown that it is important to determine for ourselves the nature and scope of our resistance to oppression. However, this does not mean that we should rule out making alliances with other groups in order to achieve changes. Indeed, our understanding of our own predicament can clearly be deepened by knowing how others are held down and humiliated. The point is this: we must have equal control of the terms of association, and when we experience conflict working with other people, we must be free to express it. Moreover, the question of autonomy does not apply only to women. It affects the relationships between people of different classes, races and other groups. So I do not think that autonomous organisation means we never associate. It is not the same as separatism.

In Leninism, the Party always transcends

the partialities of the parts. It is seen as having a superior understanding, for instance, to the (supposed) purely trade-union consciousness of workers. The fact that some parts have more power in society than others may be recognised, but there is nothing within the theory to prevent them also establishing power within the Party. This is not the only danger. The very fact of oppression in society as a whole will mean that self-determination can be denied even when there is a *theoretical* opposition to such a denial. Ultimately the only way to make resistance effective is to continue autonomous organisation and combine this with strong participation in more general forms of association. Surely this has been the experience of the shop stewards movements and the trade unions?

From some socialists came the charge that in dwelling on changes in everyday life we had ignored the problem of state power. I think we felt the need to assert aspects of struggle which are often dismissed on the Left, and that is why we concentrated more on experiences of social life than on taking over government, which is the aim of the Labour Party, or on the revolutionary transformation of the state, which is such a crucial aspect of Leninism. But we should probably have asserted more clearly that we do not believe we can harmoniously evolve towards socialism without confrontation on a massive scale with the powers that be.

Some of the arguments have been rather less weighty (get them in the stocks and sling as much mud at them as you can quick, before



more of the ornery critters appear!). There has been the old accusation that critics only criticise because they are middle-class. This is a well-tryed way in which functionaries (often themselves middle-class) in socialist parties have kept both intellectuals and workers under their thumb. A more novel accusation is that we are ageing. Now we three who wrote the book are in our thirties, but we did not clone the large planning group which has ranged between twelve years and seventy odd so far. Merely becoming elderly cannot surely be a political offence. Perhaps some people think that creeping senility has added our brains and sapped our virility. (But of course the embarrassing detail of the sex of large numbers of us requires amendment to, humph, ‘fecundity’ — which begins to make it all sound very odd indeed.)

THE MOST OBVIOUS hope for this meeting on 30 August is that it will be a place where people from very different traditions learn and communicate. This in itself would be valuable. Some of us on the planning group would also like to see some continuing loose but workable structure set up, to strengthen and deepen these links locally, perhaps with a longer gathering as a yearly event. We are certainly not trying to create a clearly defined tendency. There are surely enough of these.

But a very real dilemma keeps coming up at the planning meetings, which is the tension between simply trying to link and the need to explore what we mean by socialism. Somehow we have to find a way of agreeing on a common search while disagreeing on particular aspects of the route. For I think the energy simply to link would soon be dissipated, there are so many demands and claims on time. John Bohanna, a shop steward in the car industry who has been involved in discussions since we wrote the book, puts it this way: ‘It is an attempt for all those people who feel somewhat like a blindfolded person in a darkened room, to look for the strength to untie the blinds, find the door and begin to build a society based on socialist politics outside in the light.’

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Codes today, law tomorrow?

THE GOVERNMENT'S PUBLICATION of its draft Codes of Practice on picketing and the closed shop has already provoked considerable concern among trade unionists and lawyers about the Codes' status and legal effect.

The draft Code on picketing provides, among other things, that a lawful picket will very rarely exceed six people 'and frequently a smaller number will be sufficient'. Responsibility for deciding the 'right' number of pickets rests on the police. If a picket refuses to leave a picket line when told to by the police he or she is liable to arrest for obstruction. Trade union officials are to be responsible for 'ensuring that pickets understand the law'; and the Code lists a large but, it says, not comprehensive range of 'essential supplies and services' with which picketing should not interfere at all.

Although still only in draft, the Code seems to be taking effect. Two weeks ago, police limited the CPSA picket at the Brixton office of the Department of Employment to six, and arrested for obstruction those pickets above six who refused to move. There were protestations by the police and Jim Prior that this was nothing to do with the draft Codes, but they seemed a trifle disingenuous.

Codes of Practice are not uncommon and can be of assistance. The TUC has its own codes on picketing and the closed shop. But the Government's Codes are exceptional in two respects. First, codes published under the Employment Protection Act 1975 have so far been the work of ACAS and have been concerned with relatively uncontentious issues such as the mechanics of time off for union activities and disclosure of information by employers to unions. There was a broad measure of agreement between unions and management on the ACAS codes and of course ACAS is independent of the Government and is specifically and solely concerned with improving industrial relations. Prior's draft Codes introduce highly controversial provisions relating to industrial action which affect, essentially, only one side of industry and, as the Government knows, are vigorously opposed by the very people to whom they apply. They are not (as Codes of Practice are supposed to be) an impartial guide to industrial relations but a statement of the Government's partisan views.

There is a crucial difference between Government's Codes and the ACAS codes where enforceability is concerned. Industrial tribunals are obliged to take the ACAS codes into account, if they consider them relevant, whatever legal issue is in dispute before them. But of course tribunals have very limited jurisdiction. By section 3(8) of Prior's Employment Act it is not only a tribunal but a court (any court) that is obliged to take them into account. So for the first time, Codes of Practice are to be used in the High Court — presumably in labour injunction cases — perhaps even in criminal courts. The section does not specify civil courts.

Mr Prior's claim that the Codes are just 'guidelines' cannot therefore be taken seriously. They carry the potential for making greater inroads into trade unionists' rights than the Employment Act apparently intends. For instance, under the Act, workers may picket on-



The sort of intimidatory picketing which the Tories were elected to stop: Danny Broderick forms a lone picket outside Adwest Engineering in Reading. Below: the police restore order by removing Broderick (a T & G convenor) on the sensible grounds that he is 'causing an obstruction'.



ly at their own place of employment; but if that provision is met, there appears to be no further restriction on the picketing. However the Code says — and a court *must* take account of this — that numbers of pickets (and this includes workers employed at the workplace being picketed), should be limited to six or less. So a person's right to picket at his or her own place of work may be denied if more than six are already there. The provision in this way becomes not a 'guideline' but a specific directive.

Prior has insisted that these Codes do not enlarge the criminal law. But it is curious, then, that the provision relating to the number of pickets comes in the section dealing with the police's duty to limit picketing. The average Magistrates Court is no great repository of constitutional learning and might well be tempted to justify a crackdown on pickets by reference to the Code of Practice.

Many of the provisions of these codes (such as those dealing with essential supplies) are provisions a lot of Tories wanted to see as legislation. At the moment they stand simply as a vacuous litany of imprecations which are not attached to anything in the Employment Act at all. In a year's time, though, the

Government may say that the Codes have been in force for 12 months, some unions are not obeying them, and it is a natural progression to make them more directly enforceable as Acts of Parliament.

The Government's union legislation as it presently stands is like a quarter-completed jig-saw puzzle. The Employment Act is a hopelessly obscure and inconsistent document. It is draconian in its limitation of picketing to an employee's own place of work. Yet other forms of industrial action are much less affected. For example, the decisions in the case of *Express Newspapers v MacShane* and the case brought by private sector employers during the steel strike are apparently unaffected, even though the Tories suggested that they were the justification for the Act.

There is no logic in the new Employment Act, or in the Codes, unless they are placed in the context of Jim Prior's 'step-by-step' approach. It should not be thought that Mr Prior and his more extreme back-benchers differ in the end they have in view, for they merely favour different means of achieving it. Going step by step instead of full pelt is only a less conspicuous way of reaching exactly the same destination.

London Diary

□ The John Lewis Partnership, as millions of shoppers know, is a wonderful institution. Their department stores have the proud 'Never Knowingly Undersold' boast (I have enforced it myself). Their Waitrose supermarkets are equal to that other acceptable face of shopkeeping capitalism, Sainsburys. But in addition, John Lewis Partnership is owned and controlled by the workers, among whom all profits are shared. My faith is, however, being severely tested by the company's decision to close their John Barnes store in Finchley Road and replace it with a branch of Waitrose. John Barnes — a department store and a supermarket — makes a profit. Indeed, at the moment it probably makes a bigger profit than the mammoth department store up the road at the Brent Cross Shopping Centre, which JLP do not intend to close and to which they hope their customers will now travel. John Barnes' problem is that it does not fit neatly into JLP management's policy of keeping the department stores separate from the food chain. As the profit figures suggest, the customers — I am one — quite like the store's hybrid quality, and I have no intention of going off to Brent Cross. I doubt whether, after a £2 million investment, the new Waitrose will be all that profitable.

The decision itself is bad enough — confirming the theory that managements close the successful businesses rather than the unsuccessful — but the execution is even worse. The Partnership's constitution recognises the business's responsibility to the community 'from which it makes its money' but in this case it has said that unless the local council agrees to the plans for Waitrose and a car park, the Partnership will pull out of the site. In addition the public relations hand-out for the Partnership says:

Right through the management structure runs the Partnership's belief that the sharing of knowledge is at least as important as, and maybe more important than, the sharing of power and profit.

In this case the John Barnes staff were not consulted in any way about the closure. I have had several telephonic tussles with the man at JLP head office about this and his position is that managers must be allowed to exercise their commercial judgment and they are ultimately accountable to the partners through the board. However, seven of the 12-strong board are appointed by the chairman — who can only be removed by the partners' representatives *in extremis* — and profit figures are not published for individual stores, so that past management decisions cannot be effectively challenged. As the Partnership ideal recognises, more important than formal ownership, or even formal institutions of control, is the prevalent ideology; and in the case of John Barnes, managerial capitalism is the ideology on display.

□ On one thing, however, I find myself in agreement with the John Lewis Partnership: 'The rewards for taking a financial risk should never be unlimited.' I was reminded of the fact that, in Britain, limited liability gives people the possibility of unlimited reward for limited risk when I read in the *Financial Times* this week of Mr Richard Beecham and Mr Basil

Feldman. Earlier this year the toy company which these two ran — Dunbee-Combex-Marx — went bust, leaving £18 million of unpaid debts and 4000 workers' jobs in the balance. The pair have re-emerged as the purchasers of some of the profitable bits of Dunbee now being sold by the Receiver. Beecham — who now happily admits that he was over-optimistic and 'lacked the skills of a financial controller' — has been bankrolled by the County Bank (part of NatWest), the Industrial and Commercial Finance Corporation (owned by the banks) and some overseas investors. Feldman is backed by ICFC and Electra Investment Trust. Both men are putting money into the new outfits themselves, in Beecham's case £500,000. How did they manage to keep that much? Well, in October 1977 the pair sold £850,000 worth of shares to a group of institutional investors. This was a week after they said that 1977 profits would be 'significantly' ahead of those in 1976. In the event they were not. The institutions were pretty annoyed about this, but their ire increased in October 1978 when the company plunged into losses, following more optimistic statements. The institutions cross-examined the directors and were satisfied, but in 1979 the losses were over £5 million and the company well on the way to bankruptcy. For the record, these institutions are the pension funds and insurance companies looking after your and my savings, whom we pay for their financial skill and acumen.

□ I hope no-one will be discouraged from going to see the National Theatre's production of Brecht's *Galileo* by last week's review of the play in the *New Statesman*. Having read of its 'stunning banality', of its resemblance to 'being buttonholed by a solemn bore reshuffling his idées fixes', of its strategically placed 'six jokes' and its rigged debate, I went to see the play with heavy heart, especially as the translation is by Howard Brenton, author of the unspeakable *Short Sharp Shock*. These judgments could not have been more wrong: it is an exciting, intelligent, funny play and not at all boring. And, as Brenton says in his translator's note, 'this play has cheered me up.' Throughout the play runs Brecht's confidence in ordinary people's capacity to grapple with new and complex ideas. At one stage he says to his academic friend Sagredo, of his down-to-earth housekeeper Sarti: 'And people like that can't grasp the truth? They'd gobble it down.' That should be written above the desks of every bureaucrat, politician, union leader and businessman in the land.

□ I went to *Galileo* with a photographer friend of mine who has just returned from a trip to India and who told me the following extraordinary story. One day in June, when in Delhi, she went for an early morning walk. Suddenly the peace was disturbed by the noise of a small red aeroplane and, as the newspaper had been full of reports of his new toy, she realised that this was Sanjay Gandhi's plane. So she started to photograph it and she continued photographing while it crashed. Within a few minutes thousands of people had appeared, including the local constabulary. One of the policemen approached her, asking for the camera. Displaying admirable professional calm under the circumstances, he carefully re-wound the film into its cassette and took it from the camera, 'in the interests of national

security.' Imagine, then, my friend's surprise when three hours later she saw her photographs on the front of the national newspaper — a piece of work for which she received no credit and no payment.

□ When I last wrote the diary I quoted some excruciating gobbledegook from an advertisement which the International Thomson Organisation — the owner of *The Times* — was running in the American financial press. The purpose of this ad was to encourage other companies into the Thomson fold — paid for, by the way, with the profits of North Sea Oil. In view of what has been going on at *The Times* recently it is worth recalling another part of that ad. It said the management philosophy of International Thomson offered 'real opportunities to people, supported by the human and financial resources they need.' 'Financial resources' was the phrase that rang in my ears when I read the letter which Dugal Nisbet-Smith, managing director of Times Newspapers, sent to the journalists who want the 21 per cent wage increase recommended by the independent arbitrator (the Montague Burton Professor of Industrial Relations at Leeds University) instead of the 18 per cent on offer. Nisbet-Smith's argument is that *The Times* cannot afford this. The cost of the extra increase is £115,000 and any organisation the size of *The Times* can 'afford' that sort of money — it depends what its priorities are. Of course Nisbet-Smith is worried about the knock-on effects of such an increase on other employees. This was an argument I heard frequently when I negotiated with the management at the *Daily Mail* and it struck me then that they were just asking me to do their job for them. In *The Times* case Nisbet-Smith also has the gall to argue that the journalists should moderate their wage claims in the face of the company's losses. As the proposals would give an average wage of almost £14,000 a year I find many people are rather sympathetic to this argument. It is worth remembering that in 1978, when the management closed the paper down, Times Newspapers was making a profit: £2.9 million in the eleven months before closure. The closure — which completely failed to break the power of the unions and achieve the planned cuts in the work force — was only brought to an end by significant wage increases, which have helped increase the company's running costs. Without any sort of control over the company, it is unclear why the employees should pay for this destruction of a profitable concern. When they closed *The Times* it looked like a paradigm of what the employers wanted to do to us; it still does.

Christopher Hird

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

□ A 'mistake' in the *Times* personal column led to the Ker-Lindsays' marriage in June 1970. They had only vaguely discussed marriage when their engagement was announced in *The Times*. Rather than deny the engagement, they made it official. — *Guardian* (George Montgomery)

□ Marriages can be strengthened as a result of one partner spending some time in prison, according to preliminary research carried out last year by a working party of prison chaplains. — *Catholic Herald* (Abby Riddell)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

America's second war

From John Pilger

R.G. Kershaw's remarks (NS letters 15 August) about my report from Indochina (NS 1 August) are both inaccurate and inane. I did not write, as he says, that the primary aim of the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia was humanitarian, nor, I presume, would he describe the primary aim of the Allied invasion of Europe as the liberation of the Jews. He apparently objects to a comparison of Pol Pot's Cambodia with Hitler's Europe, but at the same time refers to Prince Sihanouk's 'brilliant' *Chroniques de Guerre* in which (chapter 12) Sihanouk compares Pol Pot to Hitler. He quotes this same chapter to support his statement that the Vietnamese set out to subjugate Cambodia 'probably in the latter part of 1977 after Pol Pot had ignored the first Vietnamese warnings'. There is *nothing* in this chapter to support this. What Sihanouk does say (on page 114) is this: 'The government of Pol Pot have refused all propositions of peaceful resolution repeatedly presented by the government of Hanoi ...'.

Such academic slovenliness includes the use, as an apparently reliable source, of Pol Pot's *Black Paper*, whose racist outpourings and fantasies are obvious to all but the most committed. If the Vietnamese media ignored Pol Pot's atrocities until the end of 1977, as Mr Kershaw says and which I do not doubt, how can they be the skilled propagandists he describes? The truth is the Vietnamese case has always been better than their propaganda. The same cannot be said of certain Indochina 'specialists' in Britain; alas for them, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find the sources and subtleties with which to apologise on behalf of the mass murderers of the Cambodian people.

33 Holborn, London EC1

Alternatives to doomsday?

From Simon Shaw

Lord Carver has had his say, at length; and it has been reported, and institutionalised, in the august pages of the official journals. His one-page article in your journal (15 August) just said it all again — the old tales, told to us *ad nauseam*, of Britain's honourable place in NATO and the nuclear club, our willingness as a nation 'to share the responsibility, the odium and the determination to use them, if need be'. Them: nuclear bombs, of course, with the capacity to kill and maim millions of people. Our people, or Russian people? It doesn't matter; Europe's 'umbrella' has Medusa's head deeply engraven in it; and nothing is more certain than that the destruction which Lord Carver is willing to unleash on Russian people will be turned back on us.

But Lord Carver is wrong, damnably wrong. We are not all willing to share the responsibility of murder. We do not have the determination to use nuclear bombs on innocent populations of any nations. We refuse to accept that black odium. Lord Carver's rigid theories of commitment to NATO and the US war machine may be fossilised in the stone walls of official policy, but that does not mean they are held by the people of this country.

I believe that we must not, and will not, endorse them. Lord Carver's voice has been heard often enough, in its old, ancestral prophecies of war. It is time that different voices were heard, the voices of people who do not want Lord Carver and official policy to speak for them. Your journal should allow space for such people to tell Lord Carver that the whole horrible machinery of nuclear destruction is unacceptable, and that the people of Britain will not tolerate it in their land. Then, perhaps, there is a chance that his terrible prophecies will never be fulfilled.

Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge

From H. J. Abrams

Field Marshal Carver, like William Rodgers (NS 18 July), fails to discuss the implications of increasing the accuracy of missiles to the point when they can

be used in a first strike role. President Carter's 'Presidential Directive 59' and its decision to develop a counter-force capacity marks the end of the era in which it could be argued that 'Mutually Assured Destruction' kept the peace between big powers. A Soviet missile attack from submarines in our coastal waters will be able to wipe out all Cruise and similar missiles in the UK virtually without warning. Conversely our military will be obliged to argue for a pre-emptive strike because of the vulnerability of our weapons. Attack will be not only the best but the only form of defence. Presumably the attacked would still be reluctant to initiate an unequal mutual destruction of non-military cities.

Both Carver and Rodgers oppose the UN Special Session on Disarmament 1978 proposals for nuclear weapon free zones; indeed the argument that there can be no nuclear disarmament which leaves disparities in conventional or chemical weapons has great force. The Labour Party's Draft Manifesto ideas are thus inadequate, too. Neither Carver nor Rodgers nor the Labour Party Draft Manifesto have any valid proposals to end nuclear weapon proliferation worldwide. The truth is that the technology of the arms race has reached a point where the major powers must sink their political differences to create peace-keeping and enforcing institutions under the UN or turn the world into a radioactive wasteland. Cooperation seems unthinkable, if like Rodgers one denounces the USSR, while being silent about analogous Western crimes.

The Disarmament Committee should bring to the 1982 UN Special Session on Disarmament detailed proposals for general disarmament under UN supervision and enforcement. A powerful international army could be used to prevent small nations being butchered in proxy wars and used to assure people in neutralised zones of human rights and democratic freedoms. It could be used to police demilitarised zones in the developed world, including London, New York and Moscow, and to prevent nuclear proliferation if political and economic sanctions failed, say against Brazil. The process of disarmament in nuclear terms should involve first the handing over of the vulnerable destabilising weapons such as Cruise and so on until even the old enemies could agree to the final steps of abandoning their submarine and hardened silos.

Idealism and realism can meet — on the brink of catastrophe. Williams Rodgers and Co and even Robin Cook cannot rationally discuss the proper defence of Britain without recognising the dilemma in which the advent of accurate first strike weapons has placed humanity — Unite or Perish.

Old Hall, Lakes Road, Marple, Stockport

From M. R. D. Foot

If the Cruise missile is as inefficient as your issue of 22 August suggests, why have the Russians made so much fuss about its adoption by NATO?

88 Heath View, London N2

Inconvenient safety

From Adrian Wheeler

Martin Bailey's argument (NS 1 August) that Open Registries are less safe than conventional flags is familiar, but rests on faulty evidence. He rightly cites the *Betelgeuse* disaster as an example of what can happen when owners neglect their ships. But he wrongly attributes this neglect to the latitude afforded by Liberian registry; the *Betelgeuse* was registered under the French flag.

He states that eight out of the last ten supertanker disasters involved Open Registry vessels. Liberia and Panama are by far the most popular registries for ships of this class, so this would be statistically unsurprising. It is, also, however, untrue; Lloyd's *Shipping Economist* reports 27 tanker losses in the twelve months to 31 May 1980, of which 11 were vessels registered under 'Flags of Convenience'.

There is no evidence that Open Registry tankers are less safe than others; rather the reverse. While most people in the shipping industry recognise the

need for improvements in tanker safety, the flag of registry is simply not a factor. Much more to the point is the attitude of the owner, who must resolve a conflict between ship safety and commercial viability. The fact that it is so difficult is the *real* reason why nations without a historical commitment to shipping tend to steer clear of this industry.

35 Falconwood Court, Montpelier Row, London SE3

Absolutely no connection

From Hal Miller MP

My attention has been drawn to an article (NS 15 August) suggesting that the Campaign for the Defence of the Motor Vehicle is linked through Action '75 with Moral Rearmament and associating me with Action '75 by inference and so with MRA. My interest in the car industry stems from the fact that 12,000 of my constituents are directly employed by vehicle assemblers and as many again in component factories and vehicle distribution — and servicing. Naturally I am concerned to defend jobs in the car industry and responded readily when approached by CDMV as the only Tory MP who voted for the original BL rescue under the Ryder Plan. Later I attended the Action '75 meeting at Digbeth to speak about the motor industry at a time of industrial strife threatening the future of the industry.

I have no interest in MRA and no evidence of MRA being involved in CDMV activities. Indeed, if I thought there was such a link I should no longer be associated with CDMV in any way. Incidentally, I also believe that Action '75 was originally founded quite independently of MRA and that Albert Ingram has left Action '75 precisely because of subsequent links with MRA.

House of Commons, London SW1

Significant insignia

Name and address withheld by request

The NS reported (15 August) that the Troops Out Movement delegation to Belfast was confronted by a soldier wearing a flak jacket on which was the emblem of the National Front. The *Daily Mirror* (16 August) reported that the 'rumpus' the offending emblem caused was an embarrassment to the army, but that no disciplinary action would be taken because the soldier concerned 'did not know the significance' of what he wore. This latter I find extremely hard to believe.

In 1977 myself and a group of six were marched at gun point by a squad of Royal Marine Commandos to a West Belfast barracks for questioning. The squad's leader had the words National Front boldly printed on his flak jacket, and he made it clear that he knew the significance. The photograph we managed to take of him was ruined when our RUC searchers exposed the film.

The reply to my letter of complaint to the MoE said that the wearing of 'unauthorised insignia while on duty was a breach of army discipline and that 'soldiers are issued with instructions explaining how to remove writing on flak-jackets and those who do not comply may be liable to disciplinary proceedings'.

A number of West Belfast residents have told me that soldiers wearing NF and UVF on their flak jackets are not an uncommon sight. Fascists traditionally infiltrate the police and military. Some right-wing Labour ex-ministers have grabbed headlines by issuing a dire warning that democracy in danger because left 'extremists' have entered the Labour Party. Some attention needs to be given to fascist entryism into the forces of the state.

Information wanted

Fabian Society: material on Fabian societies outside the British Isles (constitutions, lecture or publication lists, names of members or officers) would be appreciated for a new history being prepared for the Society's Centenary in 1984.

Dianne Hayter, General Secretary, Fabian Society
11 Dartmouth Street, London SW1.

Happy birthday

I do not much care for novelty (no power on earth is ever going to get me onto a hang-glider or one of those surf-boards with a sail and off which people fall into the sea) and for many years now I have fought against the wide use at 'Myrtlebank' of tea-bags. I am far from happy about their bogus and clinical and synthetic white appearance before immersion (one bag for you, and one bag for me, and none for the pot) or, after immersion, their depressing and lukewarm brown sogginess and the unacceptable feel of them before they find their way into the trash-can (I have a contraption called a pedal-bin, worked by pressure from the foot — to have been a bicyclist is a help — and a household boon if ever there was one) and the lid comes clattering down and removes them from sight. I have a suspicion that tea tastes better if direct contact is made between boiling water and fragrant leaf, rather than filtered through a sort of gauzy envelope that looks, before use, all too like a small emergency dressing in a casualty ward ('Nurse Rackstraw will attend to you — over here, Edyth').

I am also convinced, however much professional cooks may disagree with me, that meat likes the proximity of a flame and that joints cooked in a gas-oven have a richer taste than those roasted by electricity, graciously though kind guests may greet one's own efforts in this latter culinary field ('Your leg is a dream of succulence'). How widely, one wonders, have foreigners, few of them tea-drinkers, taken to tea-bags? On my recent holiday in Amalfi, we ordered, one hot and thirsty afternoon, tea on the terrace and it arrived, complete with tea-bags, labels hanging down from inside the tea-pot informing us that the name of this brand of tea-bag was SIR WINSTON and, plainly, a British bag. It certainly provided restorative tea, a liquid that was never, I would think, of very much interest to that revered figure.

My Devon grandmother, also not one for novelty, would have much disapproved of tea-bags. Though not herself a geisha, her tea-making ceremonies would have easily outstripped, in elaboration and duration, anything that the inscrutable Japanese could dream up in one of those dainty tea-houses. Surrounded by tea-caddies (she favoured a blend of Earl Grey and finest Darjeeling, the latter to 'give it body'), a steaming kettle on a stand above a spirit-lamp, a sugar bowl and slices of lemon, a silver tea-pot, a milk jug and an array of rather pretty Rockingham tea-cups, she got busy, if her somewhat languid movements may be so described. Even when the tea was brewed and one was panting for a sip, each tea-cup had to be partially filled with hot water to warm it up, the water then being emptied into a, odious word, slop basin. My grandmother invariably wore at tea-time one of those dresses with long and dangling sleeves and which, with the Rockingham at maximum risk, had to be held back with the other arm, thus reducing her general mobility and effectiveness, though contributing greatly, like those Japanese bows, to the stately nature of the proceeding. From the opening of the first caddy to the moment when she looked up and said, with a rising inflection, 'Tea, anybody?', twenty minutes had gone by — in childhood, a

lifetime. And being the youngest present, one got one's tea, naturally, last, an arrangement as doubtfully just as that which obtained at school when they said, preparing to dispense something, 'Line up in alphabetical order' (hard cheese on the Zuckermans of this world but jolly for the Annans. One only hopes that being first in line at a youthful age does not carry with it any damaging psychological element).

The relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is often a highly pleasing one (all spoilings, and no naggings, the latter being the parents' happy privilege), but alas, I could establish no sort of acceptable rapport with my Devonian grandmother, for I looked at that age all too like my father, and between him and her the rapport had been negligible. She seemed incredibly ancient and wrinkled and wizened and I have sometimes wondered, while perhaps waiting for a bus (probably a No. 22, queen of the fleet), how old she was when I first, around 1914, became aware of her. And this very day and in the weird way that such things happen, I have been able, after all these years, to find out.

As most reviewers of literature know, one's tables and window-seats are apt to pile up with attractive books kindly sent by publishers and authors, understandably anxious that their products should have as public an airing as possible and which indeed one does one's best to encourage and foster. It is no longer as easy at it once was to dispose, at half price, of unwanted review copies, and books come whizzing back with letters saying 'Thank you but we already have 89 copies of *Feast Not Thine Eyes* and can accept no more'. So space on shelves must be found for many of them and this involves a periodical thinning out of books (hospitals are, I find, glad of them and, priced at 5p, they go like hot cakes at church fêtes). However thoroughly one weeded last time, one can always find at least fifty more

books that now qualify for the chop and thus, recently ferreting about, and reluctantly, among some novels of Charlotte M. Yonge (a prime favourite of my mother's) and deciding that *The Penniless Princesses* would have to go, I suddenly came upon my father's birthday book, chock-a-block with entries in my parents' handwriting, and there is my grandmother's name, with 'Born 1843' alongside. She was already 67 when I was born, and by non-rapport time was into the 70s. How odd that both in childhood and in youth, one hadn't even the very faintest idea of the age of anybody who wasn't also a child.

I cannot imagine where, all this time, *The Blue Birthday Book*, published in 1892, has been lurking. It provides, I see, 'proverbs, maxims and quotations for every day of the year', is of course of mainly a pious nature, and goes in strongly for rhyming couplets, such as 'Do not hurry, do not flurry: Nothing good is got by worry', with a sprinkling of Shakespeare and Longfellow and quite a lot that the editress, Mary Trebeck, seems to have manufactured under her own steam ('The devil will be where we think he's not: Security's Vale is his favourite spot'). Some of her advice is doubtful in the extreme, for example 'If you wish to be well, and you do I've no doubt, Just open the window before you go out' — a clear invitation to Burglar Bill to pop a leg over the sill, leave a message of contempt on the carpet and then hook it briskly with the plate.

It is far from difficult to get, on occasion, quite fairly ratty with Ms Trebeck. What about, for instance, 'He that would please all, and himself too, Undertakes much more than he can do', which would be a suitable house builder's motto ('We're hoping to get around to you again some time next month'). Then, those whose birthdays are on July 3rd are provided with the following piece of misinformation: 'Sands make the mountains high; Moments the years that fly; Trifles, life's history.' Mountains are very seldom composed of sand, and to inform, say, a Crimean veteran, who lost a leg at Inkerman and, on returning home, found that his wife had done a bolt with the butler, that his life's history has been composed of trifles, would qualify the authoress for a swipe to the head with his wooden leg. And what about those who, born on February 16th, look eagerly to the birthday book for a word of comfort — a *pensée* from Tennyson, perhaps, a few bracing words from Smollett or a heartening line from Bishop Wordsworth of Lincoln. What do they find instead? 'The sharper the blast, the shorter 'twill last' — just a rubbishy weather hint of very doubtful veracity and one which one would scarcely care to pass on to the luckless many who were in the devastating path of Hurricane Allen.

As to Ms Trebeck's sadly ineffective medical information ('Three doctors that can cure more than any other can, Dr Diet, Dr Quiet and Dr Merriman'), the less said the better, and although woefully little is known of her as a hostess (I seem to see her in furnished rooms at Worthing), there are grounds for thinking that her little 'dos' lacked vivacity and interest ('Him to my table I do not invite, Who loves by words an absent friend to bite'). And turning to my own birthday, May 10th, what idiocy do I find? 'One ploughs, another sows; Who will reap, no one knows?' Try telling *that* to the many splendid farmers whose fields lie in and around Appleton.

Roger Woddis

Clarity

I'm handing in my resignation,
Quite resolved to leave the band,
Finding things, to put it bluntly,
More than flesh and blood can stand.

Arguments are academic,
All this fuss about a spy —
I'm convinced of what I'm doing,
Though I can't be certain why.

Oxford wants the issue buried,
Cambridge says the chap must go:
Skeat and Plumb and Cobb and Taylor —
Two for yes, and two for no.

Others wallow in confusion,
I'm quite clear in what I say:
I'm opposed to the resigners —
Or is it round the *other way*?

BOOKS IN GENERAL

Rick Rogers

Climbing Frames

In Britain, seven out of ten children under five have no access to care or educational provision outside the home. Most of what does exist is voluntary and informal — an ambiguous tribute to the British make-do spirit and an indictment of opportunist politics and dead-hand administration.

The preschool provision that does exist frequently does not fit in with what parents want or need — nor, say the Oxford Preschool Research Group, the needs of the under-fives themselves. To make matters worse there is no immediate prospect of any overall improvement in either quantity or suitability of provision. Nor is there any general agreement on what should be provided for whom. There is even confusion about just who preschool provision is for.

Here, briefly, is the current situation. 'Preschools' break down thus: state nursery schools and classes, reception classes attached to primary schools, playgroups, day nurseries (local authority and private), childminders and workplace nurseries. Together these provided 914,676 places in 1977 — 298 places for every 1,000 children under five (mostly three- and four-year-olds). There are just over three million under-fives and one and a quarter million of them are catered for in some way, officially.

The state/private-cum-voluntary sector split is, officially, about 40 to 60. Most children are in voluntary playgroups (600,000), followed by nursery schools/classes, and under-fives starting early at primary school (between 400,000 and 450,000 or 17 per cent of three- and four-year-olds). State provision is poorest in all-day care places and most children end up with childminders — some 70,000 places are available with registered minders. Estimates of the number of children going to unregistered minders vary from 50,000 to over 300,000. All these figures are approximate — no-one has precise figures because of the full- and part-time split and the doubling or even trebling up of children in relation to places. What is for sure is that there are not enough preschool opportunities of the right quality or

which match need to type of provision.

Fortunately, a clutch of books has been published over the last few months which at least allows us to get to grips with the different preschool 'camps' (for that is what they seem to have become). More usefully, the books also propose how we might construct a comprehensive and satisfactory preschool service — comprehensive in its ubiquity and accessibility; satisfactory in its ability to meet the various needs and demands (not always the same) of children and parents. Unfortunately the books offer different solutions.

The first salvo was fired last year by Penelope Leach in her Penguin special *Who Cares?* It was a sometimes shrill polemic for preschool care to be 'returned' to the mother, and for the state to withdraw, in part, from the field. She sets down a 'mothers' liberation

self-help community facilities such as one o'clock clubs, better environmental planning in favour of children, and an increase in the use of childminders (to be renamed day-minders or substitute mothers) for women who want or need to go out to work.

It's easy to deride the Leach position. Much of what she says though makes good sense. Parents do need more support and advice; they need more control over their own lives. Children need a more benign environment inside and outside the home. But the implication of the Leach polemic is that mothers are being cowed into accepting provision which isn't, in fact, there at all — nor likely to be for some time to come. Her core message and ultimate solution are for the few and are likely to subvert children and women to a romantic and, for many, over-the-top notion of motherhood as stifling and nasty as any iron-curtain baby farm vision she seems herself to fear from greater state involvement in preschooling.

The evidence seems to be against her — as stacked up by the Thomas Coram Research Unit's *Nurseries Now*. This is a two-in-one book — and sometimes reads uneasily for that. It's a useful reference work on preschooling with a run-through of the different views on how things should be. It's also



charter' — for which two and a bit cheers. A woman should have the right not to be a mother (presumably free contraception and abortion on demand); the right to full information on parenthood and child development (to be a school's obligation); the right to 'understand her own importance to any child she has'.

The last is a call for consistent individual care for a child. Penelope Leach believes that current preschool policy and thinking are geared to getting mothers out to work rather than meeting the particular needs of young children. The media, the women's movement, fashion, governments, the TUC, the Equal Opportunities Commission have, according to the Leach view, bullied mothers into feeling guilty about wanting to stay at home and look after a child through to five. Stop bullying and true motherhood rises rampant.

It needs a little official help — state allowances for mothers at home, more flexibility at work for fathers of young children,

a polemic. They have no truck with romantic revisionism. They want a national nursery service geared to local needs. No overall blueprint is proposed — various kinds of provision suit different needs and 'nurseries' is used as shorthand for all the major forms of preschooling.

Whatever is chosen though must be adequately funded, and they set out three basic requirements around which local authorities should mould what they provide — there must be enough places for all parents who want them; parents must be able to choose the age when their children start and the hours they attend; nurseries should aim to meet the needs of all children for play, care and education. In addition, parents should be able to take part in the decision-making at the nursery and have a say in what their children learn there.

The Unit put the emphasis on the working parent rather than the mothering parent — for that, they believe, is where the need is. They argue that the evidence points to both parent

Who Cares? by PENELOPE LEACH *Penguin* 75p

Nurseries Now by MARTIN HUGHES, BERRY MAYALL, PETER MOSS, JANE PERRY, PAT PETRIE, GILL PINKERTON *Penguin* £1.95

Childminder by BRIAN JACKSON & SONIA JACKSON *Routledge* £7.95

Under Five in Britain by JEROME BRUNER *Grant McIntyre* £9.95 & £3.95

Childwatching at Playgroup and Nursery School by KATHY SYLVA, CAROLYN ROY & MARJORIE PAINTER *Grant McIntyre* £9.95 & £4.25

Children and Minders by BRIDGET BRYANT, MIRIAM HARRIS & DEE NEWTON *Grant McIntyre* £9.95 & £3.95

Children and Day Nurseries by CAROLINE GARLAND & STEPHANIE WHITE £7.95 & £2.95

and child deriving substantial benefits, educationally and psychologically, from preschooling outside the home. They also reject the feasibility of a mother's allowance or wage in lieu of going out to work. It could work only if it was part of a much larger, radical package of changes in the working arrangements of both parents and a broader range of entitlements such as extended leave, protection of wage and job levels and retraining programmes.

Childminder is billed as Brian and Sonia Jackson's long-term action-research study of childminding in Britain. But it is more than just an academic report on research done and filed away. It is a discursive, anecdotal, absorbing, but confusing amalgam of research, polemic (again) and autobiography. It swings between Jackson-verité and Jackson-schmaltz.

Briefly, what the Jacksons are saying is this — preschool provision has been thought about for too long in middle-class terms (*vide* Leach). Working-class children don't go to playgroup or nursery school, they go to childminders. Black and Asian children do so even more. In effect, the childminder — registered or 'illegal' — is the preschool for 'the poorest and the weakest groups' in society.

Latest reliable figures show there are 31,398 registered childminders providing 70,288 all-day care places. There is a rapid turnover both of children and minders. The Jacksons maintain that their action-research reveals that the number of children at unregistered minders must exceed 100,000 and could be as high as 300,000. They conclude that childminding is 'a universal and necessary consequence of the way we live now', filling the large gap in provision for working mothers. (One could say overflowing since other researchers claim that on the Jacksons' figures there are just not enough preschool children to go around the illegal minders that appear to exist.)

Whatever the numbers really are, the Jacksons stand for the childminder, legal and otherwise, and propose a childminders' charter. Minding should be encouraged and professionalised with training and support services to improve the quality of minder and minding. Such support would be inexpensive and in line with official 'low cost' provision policies of the late Seventies — and presumably with the 'no cost' policies of the Eighties. The charter calls for a new law on minding so as to end 'illegal' minding; a new name (day-care parents); automatic benefits on registration with the local authority — insurance, free milk arrangements, access to support services and materials, courses with certificates, officially ratified rates of pay and — eventually — a salaried childminding service run by local authorities.

What then is the answer? Oddly, *Who Cares?* and *Nurseries Now* start with similar intentions — greater parental involvement in preschools and improved care and education via the needs of parents — and end up with quite different 'answers'. Note that Leach subtitles her book 'a new deal for mothers and their small children' and the Coram Unit 'a fair deal for parents and children'. The Jacksons acknowledge (as do the Coram Unit) the need for a unified preschool service — to the point of calling for a minister for the under-fives and a minister for children. They also make the point (as Leach does) that too much policy is *imposed* rather than developed

'to start with people as they actually were, and see what provision could or should be developed from their situation, their sense of needs, their resources'; although Leach claims the imposed policy is *too* effective; the Jacksons that it is ineffective. But it's not clear what *specific* answer *Childminder* is putting forward — apart from the childminding enhancement programme which is just one corner of preschooling — since it ends up high on suggestion and low on analysis.

The Oxford Preschool Research Group (OPRG) doesn't give an answer — and in not doing so, does. If you follow. For the Group says that we don't know the practical answer, but we do know what needs to be done over the next five years.

The Group was set up under Jerome Bruner in 1975 — during the optimistic period when a substantial expansion of preschooling seemed on the cards, following Margaret Thatcher's abortive white paper *Education: a framework for expansion* (1972). The original purpose of the OPRG was to do research which would help to 'ensure a sensible pattern of expansion'. A subsequent aim, Bruner's own, was 'to explore how research findings could be disseminated from the research world to the practitioners of preschooling'. The underlying theme of the project though was to 'have a close look at what in fact goes on in nursery schools and classes, in playgroups, in day nurseries and at the childminders' since there was very little literature on the effects of the various forms of preschooling on a child's development. The results are in four volumes (with two more to come). The pivotal book is by Bruner himself, *Under Five in Britain*.

The work took place in Oxford between

1975 and 1978 (except for that on day nurseries which was based in London; Oxford having none). The intention was not so much to come up with a preferred form of preschooling, but rather to find out 'how to improve any of the forms of care available and how to help them better to fill the needs for which they were designed'.

The project *does* come up with some intriguing findings. For example, in nursery classes and playgroups, there is plenty of chatter but little connected conversation between children and adults. Indeed, evidence now points to parents being able to prepare their children better in language ability at home than preschools do. Preschool activities most likely to produce 'high elaboration and concentration in play' (art and music, school readiness tasks) account for only some 20 per cent of children's time. There is little collaboration between nursery teachers and playgroup workers. Day nurseries tend to be isolated from education and health service support. Professionals in each type of provision know, or even care, little for other types.

Childminding is detrimental to a third of the children in such care, and possibly for up to a half of them. Contrary to the Jacksons' conclusions, 'improving the setting, choosing qualified minders and so on do not solve the problems of children in such care. The heart of the problem ... appears to be the discontinuity between home and the minder's for the child, and the lack of adequate communication between minder and mother'. Training programmes are unlikely to be enough to enhance service or status of childminder.

These examples sound pretty depressing. But Bruner's message isn't. The project

Out of a young boy's obsession with birds and flight
comes a dazzling story of vision and escape

William Wharton's

Birdy

'Most memorable... Wharton is exceptionally gifted' — John Fowles

'A stunning performance' — Robert Nye

To read it is to fly  Penguin £1.25

highlighted where things can and do go wrong. And the point is that where provision *is* under par we do know more how to go about improving it. There is no single panacea like a new view of motherhood, earth-mother childminders, or even (at this stage) a massive injection of funds for preschooling. But there is a series of moves, outlined in part by the Coram Unit and more fully by Bruner, which can get us nearer the kind of service required to cater for the modern needs of families.

There should be more coordination between the different types of provision and between the professionals and volunteers who service them; greater parental involvement and confidence-boosting throughout; a continuing mix of voluntary and statutory support; more commitment and less inter-departmental rivalry at government level (the DHSS looks after preschool care, the DES preschool education); a closer relation between care and education in what is actually on offer.

Crucially, how *do* you reconcile the different needs of child and parent via a preschool service? That is the discordant theme which links all these books.

For Bruner then the first step must be an open and sustained debate on the future of preschooling. This would highlight the issues, needs and possibilities. It would also wrench preschool policy-making away from government and professional and make them publicly accountable for the fate of the under-fives. For this 'five-year period of reorganisation and experimentation' the Coram Unit's *Nurseries Now* is likely to be a valuable background manual. But I suspect that Bruner's will be the catalytic book. Not because he says anything unique — rather because his preschool message is more succinct and more accessible.

James Campbell

Ugly Health

Secret Rendezvous by KOBO ABE *Secker* £5.95

Nearing's Grace by SCOTT SOMMER *Peter Owen* £6.25

Seahorse by GRAHAM PETRIE *Constable* £5.95

The Flowers of the Forest by JOSEPH HONE *Secker* £5.95

In Kobo Abe's new novel a man's wife is taken away by an ambulance which unexpectedly calls at their home one morning. The couple make no effort to resist the stretcher bearers, who offer neither explanation nor authority for their mission. Only after she is gone is the husband suddenly alarmed, and the search which follows provides the action for the novel. It is, I must quickly add, action with a difference. *Secret Rendezvous* is written in the form of notebooks transcribed from tapes made of the husband's search; his every move has been bugged. The search leads him to the hospital to which he believes his wife has been taken. The place is so complex that patients need agents to help them cope; doctors are making fortunes by contributing to sperm banks; the assistant director of the hospital, otherwise known as 'the horse', has had another man's lower half grafted on to his own in the hope of curing his impotence; he believes in 'the true ugliness of health'. At one

point the husband meets a sex-hungry 13-year-old girl. 'Touch me,' she whispers. He obliges:

Layers of skin and muscle hung so slackly around her melted bones that I was unable to tell with any certainty which crease was her groin. I kept fondling her, touching every wrinkle I could find. Her breath started coming faster. . .

One laughs, if only to relieve the claustrophobic grotesquerie. In the hospital, sex presents itself as a choice between helping a 13-year-old with liquefying bones to reach orgasm and raping a steely secretary with no innate concept of relationships. All belief in the strength of love was defeated when the ambulance disappeared with the man's wife and the authorities stubbornly ignored his pleas for help in finding her. Indeed, as he writes, the husband discovers that the tapes are taking him no nearer his goal: 'The one being minced, peeled and poked at by wiretaps was a man. . . And that man was no other than I myself.' His secret rendezvous with himself results in a bare, factual report ('Name: omitted. Code number: M-73F', etc) which may be interpreted either as the final stroke of a living death or as the first step out of the self-contained state of disease which is the ever-expanding hospital.

Occasionally Abe's horrors are too grotesque to be frightening. In this respect he differs from Kafka — whom he otherwise resembles — whose nightmares can always be traced to a waking reality. But *Secret Rendezvous* is a compelling novel, rendered into fluent English by Juliet Winters Carpenter.

Scott Sommer's first novel is concerned with a more familiar state of horror and grotesquerie: adolescence. There is also a sex-mad female in *Nearing's Grace*. She doesn't have liquefying bones, though I almost feel that she would have been more attractive if she had. Grace Chance cannot make love unless she's stoned, and then it appears not to matter with whom. She makes propositions like 'Have you ever fucked on a Mah-Jongg table' and while listening to a declaration of love is likely to interrupt with 'One second, my diaphragm's in the bathroom'. Henry Nearing — the said declarant — is 18 and undergoing a painful initiation into adulthood. His encounters with Grace are constantly disturbed by the noisy arrival on the scene of his rival, Lance Guhning, a tougher character than Henry who thinks nothing of ripping Henry's motorbike to pieces or hurling objects through Grace's bedroom window while the other two are in bed. Henry is also hampered in his pursuit of Grace, or grace, by his continuing love and longing for his dead mother, to whom he still writes letters. It is an enjoyable, carefully structured novel which gains a seriousness from the hero's gradually increasing awareness of his maturity and his acceptance of the trouble it entails. However, little takes place that is interesting or that shows truly original insight into the condition of adolescence. Many of the tricks Nearing gets up to are contrived and stupid, and provoke no sympathy from the reader. Death-daring motorbike rides, for example, are not made more meaningful simply because the author chooses to nickname the bike 'Thanatos'. Nor will such half-symbolism take the place of real perception about youthful despair.

Seahorse is also a first novel. Unlike the author of *Nearing's Grace*, however, Graham Petrie is not writing out of any experience he has undergone. At least, one assumes not: 'I picked my way to the mirror and stood before

it. . . I could see the room behind me clearly, but there was still no trace of myself.' This occurs towards the close of a tale which relates how a stranger arrives in a village where the inhabitants believe that their souls leave their bodies at night to wander with other souls while the body sleeps. There is also the villagers' favourite card game, *Seahorse*, in which the rules change daily, as do the images on the cards, coinciding with scenes from the protagonist's recent dreams or from his past. There is the Institute, a factory for producing nightmares, which the stranger believes holds the key to the mystery. Then there is the landlady: 'astonishingly beautiful', only with teeth filed to sharp points; there is talk of werewolves and there is fear of mirrors — justified, it would seem, by the quotation given above.

A great deal takes place, in fact, which baffles the protagonist; and the reader. I felt cheated at the end of *Seahorse*. It seems fair to ask of a novel in which the laws of reality are suspended and which depends for its interest on unexplained mysteries, that it resolve these mysteries into a meaningful conclusion, and also that it reveal a kind of logic, however remote, in its seeming unreality. *Seahorse* appears to do neither.

The Flowers of the Forest, like Kobo Abe's novel, centres around a disappearance. Lindsay Phillips, head of a section of the Secret Service, simply vanishes from the bottom of his garden one morning. Peter Marlow takes up the case from a personal interest, not least in Lindsay's daughter, and the search takes him across Europe and into several unlikely escapades from which he has equally unlikely escapes. The backdrop to the story is a possible Soviet invasion of Yugoslavia after the imminent death of Tito and there is a lot of debate about whether Phillips has gone over to Moscow, or even 'back' to Moscow. These topical details hardly raise *The Flowers of the Forest* above the level of a well-written, mildly thrilling whodunnit, and do little to substantiate claims that the author transcends the usual limitations of thrillers. I just could not convince myself that it mattered whether Lindsay Phillips was alive or dead, and, in the end, it didn't.

John Berger

A Writer

Mother let me cry
not letterpress
nor telex
nor stainless speech
bulletins
announce disaster
with impunity—
but the pages of the wound

Mother let me speak
not adjectives
to colour
their maps of wretchedness
nor nouns to classify
the families of pain—
but the verb of suffering

My mother tongue taps
the sentence
on the prison wall
Mother let me write
the voices
howling in the falls.

Elizabethan Images

Shakespeare: The Globe and the World by S. SCHOENBAUM *Folger Shakespeare Library & Oxford* £12.50

American and British publishers, liberally subsidised by several culturally-sensitive foundations and corporations (including Exxon Oil, for whose benefit — I was recently told in the USA — we are shortly to go to war with Iran and Russia: an opportunity here surely for another of the book's backers, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co?), have jointly produced a really splendid volume at what passes today for a really moderate price: and I would have been delighted to get my hands on it, even if I had had to pay. It is not properly a book. To quote the preface, it —

celebrates the glory of Shakespeare. It has grown out of an exhibition of manuscripts, books, and other objects brought together to illuminate Shakespeare and his works, the world of the English Renaissance in which he lived, and the enduring mark he left on his own and later times. The illustrations [are] . . . from the vaults of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington DC. Conceived as a memorial to Shakespeare, this magnificent library was a gift to the American people from Henry Clay Folger and his wife Emily Jordan Folger . . .

It is in fact an expanded museum catalogue — the text illustrates the pictures, rather than the other way round. The tone of the preface continues, pleasantly enough, throughout. High-minded, enthusiastic, patriotic (for both America and England, if I make myself clear), decently scholarly without being pedantic, informative, neither condescending nor vulgar — and in the end a first-rate example of the regular Shakespeare-industry consensus-view of the poet and his life-and-times. One feels the book itself might very happily vote for Anderson in the election — policies not much different from Reagan or Carter: but a much more comforting feel about him as an *individual*: balance; compassion; no neurosis; no apparent evidence of having seen God or lusted in his heart — or felt like proving his Wayne-factor at the despatch-button of a nuclear bomb. Exxon are in business here to reassure us. For a change.

I looked up Ireland in the index. Could the regular consensus, in these post-Vietnam pre-Middle-East campaigning days, possibly include some serious recollection of the prolonged and disgusting war which was so permanent a feature of the English world in the age of the Globe, a war of even-now undiminished psychopathological consequence, a war in which the law-n-order forces maintained in their active ranks two major poets — Raleigh and Spenser — both of them participants in the massacre at Smerwick? If Norman Mailer and Edward Albee had personally terminated My Lai, would it not deserve mention in a book (c. 2280 AD) on the life-and-times of Gore Vidal? Shakespeare of course was not overtly obsessed with the Irish war — in itself that betokens something: I would like a few more scholars to ask themselves what. Anyway, the index fulfilled expectation.

Ireland noted simply as a place for the Armada to be wrecked, for Essex to be humiliated, and for the ethnic costume to provide a charming engraving. Marginal . . .

But to forget the text. The pictures are the thing, and they are breath-taking. Technically their reproduction justifies every cent from the sponsors. The Folger Collection is not primarily a store of easel paintings. All the better. Its prints, drawings, playbills, books and handwritten documents belong chiefly to English Renaissance popular and private art — for instance water-colours made for the artist's own pleasure and never intended for public display. Taken all together (except for the sections that offer a record of Shakespearean production and publicity through three centuries) they add up to a very complete survey of the sort of thing that the Elizabethan playwright, his actors, and audience, would have had before their eyes every day as the accepted visual interpretation of the society in which they lived. Such an interpretation would consequently be so much part of the playwright's imagination that we ought always to have it at the back of our minds when reading — or presenting — his plays. I don't mean always *use* it: we can totally reject it in favour of a more modern view. But we should know about it: and I have found no better book to enable us to do so.

Some characteristics of this popular art: (1) emblematic directness — the *meaning* takes priority over naturalistic imitation; (2) carefully-wrought detail, not always to scale, but intricate and linear. On a big print of the Queen nearly every stitch in her huge costume is precisely scored-in with the engraving-tool: an icon not only of Majesty but of National Workmanship. (3) Decorated surfaces — title-pages, building-facades, embroidery, map-margins — are all conceived as though pieces of the same surface, irrespective of size. The one hand might have embellished all of them with the same painful effort. (4) The Elizabethan concept of light meant clear areas of strong flat colour between hard lines, enlivened by arbitrary black shadow and sparkling points of brightness — Giorgione and Titian with their 'painterly' transitions of tone might never have existed. And because the English artists drew it so, the English people must have seen it the same way. A way that informed their poet's words, images — and stagecraft.

How does this affect our interpretation of the plays? One brief suggestion. Was Elsinore in Shakespeare's mind's eye an unrelieved unplastered deep dark cavern of a castle? Or was it — with its Osrics, funeral processions, emblematic stage-plays, drunkenness, incest, arrases, soldiers, and glittering rapiers — an elaborate set of wall-surfaces of arabesque exuberance, red and blue with gold or silver inlay and embossed fretwork — neither more or less 'three-dimensional' than the Ghost in engraved and gilded armour who haunted it, invisible to some but not to all, losing himself, as it were, in all the confectionery of the decorative entanglement? The later



Shakespeare's irregularity in his handling of blank verse in the midst of such visual formality and pattern-making becomes even more of a revolutionary act than the consensus maintains it to be. And this contradictory book, by the very look of its pages, defeats the blandness of its own corporate intention.

Katharine Robertson

Say 'Bayethe' For Us

Call Me Not a Man by MTUTUZELI MATSHOBA *Rex Collings for Raven Press, Johannesburg* £4.95

One of the most talented writers now rising out of the anonymity of Black South Africa, Matshoba also writes for *Staffrider*, a magazine which offers a voice to those hitherto without one. His powerful, sharp-edged collection of stories, *Call Me Not a Man*, was banned a month after publication.

The stories are anecdotes about uniquely South African experiences, the daily life of the 'third denomination' people — the blacks with no civil rights and little to spend. Bitterness is tempered by humour, notably in the dialogues where Matshoba artfully captures a peculiarly South African English idiom, the metaphoric quality of the African languages and the vibrance with which they are spoken.

The final story, 'Behind the Veil of Complacency', is the culmination of all the others. The message is unambiguous: unless genuine change occurs soon, no compromise will be possible.

Matshoba's writing suffers, however, two stylistic weaknesses which detract from the impact of his ideas. His mastery of syntax is shaky; and he has a tendency to halt in mid-story to inject his personal opinions. Continuity and immediacy are thus lost in delay or overstatement.

In 'A Visit to the Island of Makana', the writer's 'inner discussions' awaken a sense of his own racial feeling. Travelling by train to Cape Town on his way to visit his brother on Robben Island (where both common criminals and political prisoners are incarcerated), he is questioned by a group of women as to his destination. After an initial silence, the women offer a spontaneous message of goodwill and solidarity to the prisoners of apartheid:

So he's there with boMandela le boSisulu le boMbeki? Tell him to say *bayethe* for us to all the great men who have sacrificed themselves for us.

People such as these women have longer memories than the authorities think; the fact that Robben Island is referred to as the Island of Makana shows how an oral tradition has sustained the fighting spirit of a largely illiterate people.

'A Visit to the Island of Makana', during which the writer meets white liberals and travels to Robben Island, provides a social and economic landscape from Matshoba's own Johannesburg township, Mzimhlope, to an unfamiliar Cape Town.

'Three Days in the Land of Illusion' portrays African life — overcrowding, poverty, unemployment — in the first 'independent' Bantustan, the Transkei. Although born on the Reef, 600 miles to the north, Matshoba's native language is Xhosa; by law, he is a citizen of the Transkei. What he finds on visiting a 'homeland' completely foreign to him is a phoney independence and a pathetic dependence, political and economic, on South Africa. He prefers his own 'unbearably vibrant' home among the box-houses of Soweto.

Matshoba's style is perhaps less refined than that of Ezekiel Mphahlele or Alex la Guma, but his sharpness and humour make him a pleasure to read. Because open political protest by Africans is systematically repressed in South Africa, it has been re-channelled into art and literature. But the message remains quite clear and emphatic: South Africa will be free.

Among this week's contributors:

RICK ROGERS is the author of *Crowther to Warnock: How Fourteen Reports Tried to Change Children's Lives* (due out at the end of September from Heinemann Educational). He is currently editing a book on television and the family.

JAMES CAMPBELL is the editor of the *New Edinburgh Review*.

KATHARINE ROBERTSON has worked on a South African newspaper.

JOHN ARDEN is the author of a large number of plays for radio, television and stage.

ALAN HOLLINGHURST was a contributor to Faber's *Poetry Introduction 4*.

PETER DEWS is currently working on a general account of post-structuralist philosophies to be published next year.

DAVID WILSON is Editorial Director of the British Film Institute's publishing programme. JOHN COLEMAN will be back next week.

Alan Hollinghurst

Masks

My Guru and His Disciple by CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD *Methuen* £8.50

Isherwood's newest instalment of autobiography covers the years 1939 to 1979 but in a highly partial way. The crowded detail, the intense physical and psychological activity, the relished self-revelation which characterised *Christopher and His Kind* are drastically diminished as the story comes up to date. In the previous volume Isherwood was able to distance himself as narrator from the events he was describing, looking back on an earlier self in the third person; but the self who is partly the subject of the new book is significantly continuous with the present self of the writer, and the earlier candid manner (so lucid it prompted suspicion) now recognisably allies itself to an opaque and extremely selective subject-matter.

It is not only the pride of the novelist but the vanity of the autobiographer that suggests the ordering of four decades of experience around a single thematic thread, but whereas the novel only defines itself by its selectivity, the secretiveness and the omissions of memoirs are more provocative and disappointing. The urge to candour, which is so significant a part of the sexual/moral/artistic quest which led Isherwood eventually to California and Vedanta, is not unflagging; and the effect of this is to suggest that the candour of *Christopher and His Kind* was a brilliant and purgative revelation which once written out foreclosed the need for a similar treatment of the American years. This is not to say that Isherwood is coy: he talks of his faults, failures and habits with a frankness which is still rare; but the book is almost silent on the subject of his writing and (with an excusable reticence) of his private life since he met Don Bachardy.

The task Isherwood has set himself is defined in other terms. It is an act of filial love towards the Swami who has deeply affected him — 'If I hadn't met him, my life would have been nothing' — partly a biography of him, partly an account of how the homosexual, artistic and simply egotistical elements in Isherwood's own make-up attempted to come to terms with a man Auden admitted was 'quite obviously a saint'. These elements in Isherwood are clearly essential motives and subjects for autobiography, and they are elements which his Vedantist training (which never reached the fulfilment of his becoming a swami) required him to suppress; they are what Isherwood allows us to know him by, and if by the end of the book we do not feel we have come to know Swami Prabhavananda himself well, this is partly because of his saintliness — 'I don't feel he is altogether a person any longer' — in the light of which any personal characteristic seems endearing.

The other part of Auden's pronouncement was: 'All this heathen mumbo-jumbo — I'm sorry, my dear, but it just *won't do*.' Isherwood is entirely aware of the difficulties of making clear the significance and seriousness of Vedanta to non-initiates, and shows himself overcoming ignorant prejudices during his in-

troduction to it under the guidance of Gerald Heard. And at the end he admits how partial his understanding and attainment have been. There is nothing brazenly zealous about his treatment of the subject, no passionate avowals of faith, and this makes the self-examination increasingly sympathetic. One thing which he enjoys in Vedanta, quite unlike Christianity, is the way it expressively incorporates humour: the Swami suddenly exclaims to the assembled devotees: 'You look so funny, sitting there!' — an act which 'shattered the gravity of this ancient ritual, making it now and new'. This acceptance of the potentially farcical in religious behaviour not only invigorates the religion but allies it to the notion of an essentially serious Camp which Isherwood has summarised in 'my worst novel: *The World in the Evening*'. He has an eye for the Swami's 'very elegant, pointed shoes' or the Firbankian society devotees. Moreover he continues to insist on himself as a 'playactor', frightened at a subconscious level to become irrevocably a certain character; and for a while the Vedanta Center appears as a trap: 'After all my other impersonations, I have picked up yet another funny mask and stuck my nose into it — and now it won't come off.' This fear of fixity is closely related to his identity as a novelist, and his restlessness is an essentially creative quality.

Hence the Camp, the hilarity, the irony not only support and render palatable the attempt at a religious life, but are also parts of the artistic life which insists on subverting it. Isherwood is instinctively observant, and his observation is a tool of his subversiveness. The San Francisco Vedanta Center 'smells of renunciation, fog and salad'; he dreads the boredom and isolation of Trabuco College with its 'dreadfully harmless table humour' because his own humour is naturally a weapon. Repressed by the Swami the fiction-writer in him becomes 'a subversive element, whose influence would grow steadily stronger', until he finds himself in an intolerably dual situation, as a lecturer on religion in India (an experience related with a monkish avoidance of exoticism) and as a person who can 'quite unashamedly get drunk, have promiscuous sex, and write books like *A Single Man*'. In effect he finds himself addressing two audiences that are virtually mutually exclusive, and has no choice but to abandon the 'God talks'.

Vedanta does discriminate against so much that is essential to the novelist. Isherwood records a saying of Vivekananda:

I hate this world... with its churches and chicaneries, its fair faces and false hearts, its howling righteousness on the surface and utter hollowness beneath, and, above all, its sanctified shopkeeping.

And his later novels did show a rejection of much of this staple fictional material, until he stopped writing fiction altogether. The remarkable thing is less Vedanta than the Swami, his intuition and penetration, his unusual tolerance and accommodation of Isherwood's difficulties and incompatibilities with Vedanta, always hoping for a fuller commitment but comprehending the reasons why it could never happen. Although it has its *longueurs* and suffers from a lack of colour this book is a humbling tribute to someone who out of a profound wisdom did not give Isherwood a system of ethics which he could never adhere to but revealed to him inner grounds for spiritual reassurance.

Well-Meaning

The Material Word by DAVID SILVERMAN & BRIAN TORODE Routledge £9.50 & £5.95

Reference, Truth and Reality edited by Mark Platts Routledge £12.50 & £6.50

Problems of the nature and functioning of language continue to be a central concern of philosophers, sociologists, and what used to be called 'literary critics'. Yet, as these two recent volumes testify, this common preoccupation by no means guarantees a shared idiom. Those — predominantly young and leftist — researchers who take their cue from the kind of theoretical work produced in France are usually innocent of the native analytical tradition, just as that tradition is ignorant of them. Indeed, over the last 10 years or so an ironic cross-over has been taking place: philosophy in this country has shifted away from the analysis of 'ordinary language' towards a renewed interest in formal theory, while French theorists have abandoned the scientific pretensions of the Sixties, and are beginning to take an interest in 'speech-acts' and 'language-games'.

The initial attraction of *The Material Word* is that it appears to bridge this divide; it contains discussions of Barthes and J. L. Austin, of Heidegger and Wittgenstein. Yet its assumptions are strangely blinkered, being derived from a combination of 'radical' Parisian semiotics and an American sociological import, ethnomethodology. Although the value of the results is dubious, a certain ingenuity was required to perceive the affinity between these geographically remote modes of thought. Ethnomethodology holds that social structures are not objectively given, but are continuously created by the self-conscious ('reflexive') activity of social agents, while recent semiology insists that the process of the text generates its own objects, that language cannot represent anything outside itself.

In classical terms, both these positions embody a thorough-going idealism. In keeping with the current inversion of terminology, however, Silverman and Torode prefer to label as 'idealist' the belief in a language-independent reality, while 'materialism' is identified with their own position, which analyses 'the multiplicity of discursive practices' (whether these practices have an objective existence, or whether we are into an infinite regress is never elucidated). Viewed in this light, 'interpretation' becomes a disreputable way of approaching texts, since it supposes a prior knowledge of a reality which the text is assumed to be about. In its place Silverman and Torode propose a new practice termed 'interruption', which aims to demonstrate that the distinction between 'appearance and reality' is internal to the text.

Armed with these theoretical premisses, *The Material Word* sets about 'interrupting' an astonishing variety of texts, from Althusser to Kafka, and from *Being and Time* to *Little Red Riding Hood*. The authors of these discourses, needless to say, are all found guilty of positing an extra-linguistic reality. Thus Basil Bernstein's distinction between restricted and elaborated codes relies on the supposed ex-

istence of 'social classes', while even in the analyses of conversation by ethnomethodologist Harvey Sacks 'the reality of sexuality [is] posed as a feature of the world somehow outside speech'. Thus the principle of 'interruption' is easily learned: it consists in holding a metadiscourse on everybody else's discourse which censures every time language is related to something other than itself. Silverman and Torode could clearly go on *ad infinitum*.

Surprisingly, the point of this exercise is intended to be 'political' — it is here perhaps that the Californian and the French connections intertwine most closely. Ethnomethodology rejected the 'objectifying' stance of 'straight' sociology in favour of a celebration of the everyday accomplishment called 'society'; 'radical semiotics' keeps its distance from everyday language, but exults in the 'happy Babel' (Barthes) of the literary text. Combining these attitudes, Silverman and Torode discover that speakers are constantly positing different realities (more prosaically: contradicting themselves and each other). This they consider to be profoundly 'emancipatory'. They do occasionally refer to the 'potentiality of collective action in the battle against constraining forces'. But in their world the only 'constraining forces' are the illusions conjured up by theorists who persist in affirming the objective existence of nature, social structure, or grammar, while 'liberation' consists in a celebration of the demiurgic powers of language. In other words, Silverman and Torode reduce the currently fashionable relativism and linguistic idealism to total vacuity.

Reference, Truth and Reality well illustrates the transformation of analytical philosophy over the last decade. Wittgenstein may still be king on undergraduate courses, but in this anthology devoted to the philosophy of language his name is scarcely mentioned. 'Ordinary

language philosophy' is now dismissed, in the words of David Wiggins in this volume, as those 'miscellaneous anecdotal materials out of which we have . . . attempted to construct a philosophy of language'. In its stead, an increasing number of English-speaking philosophers have returned to the problems of Frege and Russell: the construal of the veiled 'logical form' of natural language.

One major inspiration behind this 'new wave' is the work of the American philosopher Donald Davidson. Since the late Sixties Davidson has been proposing that an explanation of knowledge of a language can be got by marrying Frege's insight, that the meaning of a sentence can be given by stating its truth-conditions, with a definition of truth in the style of the logician Alfred Tarski. The resulting 'T-sentences' ('Snow is white' is true if and only if snow is white) may appear absurdly trivial, but the formal constraints on their derivation ensure that the completed 'theory of truth' for a natural language would not be. In fact, argues Davidson, it would capture everything of importance that philosophers have traditionally tried to deal with under the heading of 'meaning'. The papers in *Reference, Truth and Reality* are all related in some way to this programme.

A number of objections to Davidson spring from the impression that his theory leaves language floating uncomfortably in mid-air. Hartry Field, in his paper on 'Tarski's Theory of Truth' included here, argues that the reduction of denotation to a set of axioms fails to resolve the real problem. What is required is a scientific account of reference, perhaps along the lines of the causal theory of naming suggested by Kripke. Taking a different line, Michael Dummett has argued elsewhere that knowledge of such axioms cannot suffice for mastery of reference: a speaker can know that 'London' denotes London, without having the least idea what London might be.

Davidsonians are not too concerned by such objections. They argue, as John McDowell does here, that reference is secured by the functioning of language as a whole, and not by any relation specifiable prior to the construction of the 'theory of truth' for a language. Davidson himself blandly affirms that reference 'plays no essential role in explaining the relation between language and reality'.

This may appear surprising. A number of influential recent French thinkers have assumed that the collapse of reference (Derrida's 'transcendental signified') must lead automatically towards the vertiginous perspectives of relativism. But for Davidson this is not so. In interpreting a new language there is a limit to the amount of divergence in 'truth' we can bear, before we abandon the idea that what we are confronted with *is* a language.

It is at times like this that one regrets the continued division of philosophy into a number of mutually almost incomprehensible idioms. The casual reader of *Reference, Truth and Reality* could be excused for gaining the impression of having intruded on a private debating society, remote from the broader currents of contemporary European thought. On the other hand, a knowledge of the Davidsonian arguments for the necessary relatedness of meaning and truth might have a sobering effect on some of our contemporary revellers in the 'play of the signifier'.

Duncan Forbes

Mother and Son

Murals of the sunset
Search the eastern wall.
On the purple carpet,
By a wad of cotton wool,
A young boy stands naked,
Spotty and irritable.

His mother goes and fetches
The bottle of calamine,
Then dabs the hot red blisters
Of chickenpox on his skin
With pink cooling blotches
On his buttocks, legs and spine.

She patiently kneels, anointing
Each pox that is driving him wild,
Almost as if she were painting
Her own 'Madonna and Child'
And the scars she was preventing
Would leave him undefiled.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Shall It Be Thus?

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE reports from the Edinburgh Festival

In the beginning there was Brian Glover. He couldn't have been everyone's idea of God with his blunt Yorkshire vowels, podgy wrestler's stance and the bald dome of his bull-head twinkling in the artificial firmament of lamps and braziers dangling above him; but up he rose, on what appeared to be a caparisoned fork-lift, preening himself, pouting and proclaiming 'it was, it is, it shall be thus', the Mussolini of Otley, Batley and the smaller universe beyond; and the first part of the National Theatre's selection of Mystery Plays, 'creation to nativity', was on its alliterative and updated way. Before long Jack Shepherd's Lucifer had disappeared into a smoking vat with a wail of 'my brightness is blackened and blue'. John Salthouse's Cain had totalled Abel with a knuckle bone, blurring 'kiss the devil's bum'. Bryan Pringle's smirking, angular Herod had pronounced himself worthy, witty, wise and fair of face, and, with a brusque switch of tone, the innocents had been emblematically slaughtered to a pounding of drums. The audience, milling across the floor of the Assembly Hall with players dressed to resemble contemporary house-painters, carpenters, mechanics, farm-labourers and miners palpably relished the exuberance and (on the whole) unaffected good humour of it all.

Several episodes were intended to be funny by their anonymous authors. There's a spirit of mischief abroad in them, akin to that displayed by the stone imp in the medieval cathedral. Thus we have J.G. Devlin's pubby Noah swapping clouds with his shrewish wife, and thus we get the anecdote of Mak the sheep-stealer, who, in a somewhat scurrilous parody of the nativity itself, conceals a filched lamb in a crib and tries to pass it off as his own bleating progeny. Surprisingly, however, Joseph's indignation at Mary's pregnancy — the original authors' cruel mockery of that supposedly risible figure, the cuckold — emerges as the natural resentment and grief of an entirely sympathetic man. This is one of the more acceptable results of what I take to be a modern humanist bias in Bill Bryden's production. A less acceptable effect is the scepticism about the Creator's motivation and conduct apparent in Mr Glover's whimsical arrogance. The guildsmen liked their peripheral fun; but they were wheeling their Bible-stories into a York or Wakefield they believed had once been flooded by an angry deity, and they would never have been openly irreverent about the central and essential.

Worse, the impression Mr Glover conveys is of an unsophisticated prole getting a bang out of playing God; and, partly as a consequence, a feeling of quaintness, of winsome primitivism, sometimes characterises the first half of these National's revels. The folksy cavortings gratuitously cut into its fabric serve only to accentuate this. But, notwithstanding morris dancing, reels and ballads, there's no such condescension in the company's handling of the Gospel story it originally staged three

years ago and has brought to Edinburgh substantially recast, as the second part of a completer tale. Tony Harrison's bold, accomplished adaptation — 'this bargain buggers me', declares a small squaddie on Calvary, 'I'm proper out of puff' — helps a lot. So does Philip Donaghy's quiet, introverted Christ. And so does the evening's climax, which is the York Crucifixion Play, surely the first masterpiece in British theatrical history. It was originally by the Nailmakers and Pinners Guild, and is marked by a professional understanding of the mechanics of execution as well as by the humanity and dramatic guile so to exploit them that the pain and pathos of the situation become almost intolerable. Here are four stolid and not 'very competent' soldiers, bickering about measurements, leverage, sinew-stress, work-rate and pay, and, just occasionally, self-righteously gloating over the victim who has caused them so much nuisance. The shop stewards of the torture industry, and a dissident on a cross: an image for our era that is also wholly faithful to the 15th century.

If this is the 'official' festival's main artistic success, the principal popular one has been John Gray's *Billy Bishop Goes to War*, from the Vancouver East Cultural Centre. It tells the story of the Allies' prime fighter-pilot in World War I, a gauche and ill-disciplined young Canadian who shot down 72 German aircraft and was simultaneously awarded VC, DSO and MC by George V, who memorably described him as a 'busy bugger'; and it is interestingly if awkwardly poised between admiration for its subject's unpretentious courage and distaste for the bloodier aspects of what he increasingly saw as a game of tit-for-tat with the Hun. What saves the evening from shallowness, thinness and the other afflictions imperilling its success is, however, the performance of Eric Peterson in each of some 17 parts, from Billy himself to his blimpish superiors to his haughty patronness. He has a baby face, a broad, rubbery grin, and, somehow, the knack of leaping from 18 to 80, from prankishness to menace, from the flibberty-gibbet cadet to the grim professional killer.

The Ice Chimney, at the usually reliable Traverse, is another monologue, and by a specialist in the genre, Barry Collins. It is almost as long as his marathon *Judgment*, about a Russian officer's descent into cannibalism, but tells its tale of Maurice Wilson, a war-veteran, rebel and eccentric who tried to climb Everest alone in 1936, with far less lucidity and momentum; and ends up a convoluted and dramatically sluggish combination of psychological profile and humanist metaphysics. Nor does Vince Foxall, winner of a recent John Whiting award, do much for his reputation with *Brittle Glory*. A piece of tissue paper is burned by way of proving history 'a tissue of lies'; Richard II, Bolingbroke and more modern figures are brought on stage, by way of showing how little

authority, avarice and oppression have altered over the years. An obfuscatingly florid, bloated, mock-heroic style ensures the impossibility of discovering if anything more subtle or discriminating is being said.

Fortunately, those self-same virtues are in fuller supply in the 7:84 Company's latest, John McGrath's *Blood Red Roses*, about a feisty Scots lass's shop-floor war with the multinationals. The author moves as naturally between the public and the private as Arnold Wesker, and, like him, regards them as interlinking rooms in one house; but he writes from further left and with more astringency and humour, though no less warmth. The scene in which the heroine's browbeaten, apologetic friend describes how cancer has rampaged untreated through her body is a small masterpiece of personal observation and political suggestiveness. This year's Fringe surely has little better to offer.

Television

Julian Barnes

Jap Meets Yap

First the missionaries come, then the traders; the honorary consul is appointed; packaged food, sunglasses, bras and Coke arrive; the cutter brings a novelist, in quest of somewhere Maugham missed; then there is television, Winston T-shirts, and a pole to carry at the Asian Games. Last of all come the TV documentary-makers, to sift through all the archaeological layers of colonisation, to fret narcissistically about the role of television itself, and to wonder, with futile if genuine concern, whether it had been right to inflict Western technology on the welcoming locals.

It can't be easy being a Micronesian islander. First, one lot of white men come with things they know are good for you, then another lot — people's lawyers, Peace Corps workers, documentary-makers — arrive and tell you how wrong it is to enjoy what their compatriots supplied: that the dripdry knickers don't go with the grass skirt; that a person of your heritage doesn't need television (even if you enjoy it); that your fragile culture is being polluted and undermined. But whose culture is it anyway? And do Americans, owners of the most mongrel culture in the world, have the right to tell you not to overlay yours with theirs?

The World About Us (BBC-2) this week offered a hilariously depressing report on the island of Yap, victim of a seedy, though not necessarily fatal impact. While Gwynfor Evans prepares to fast for a few more hours of television in Welsh, the Yapese are wondering whether the TV system given them by their American protectors is after all an entirely good idea. Since there are only 6,000 Yapese altogether, and a mere 300 homes in the island have electricity, it's a puzzle (somewhat lethargically examined by the film) why anyone thought it worthwhile in the first place to bring them the tube. Perhaps some patriotic muddlehead in the State Department decided that a regular dose of Roy Rogers westerns would inoculate the locals against the Yellow Peril; or, just as likely, perhaps someone somewhere, misheard 'Jap' as 'Yap' and the

bureaucracy was unable to go into reverse.

In any case, the station now pumps out incongruous American videotape every day, adding their own Yapese news on Tuesdays and Fridays. Nothing prevents daily newscasts except a terrible lack of news on Yap. While back home Richard Baker is smoothing out a pre-transmission eyebrow with a licked middle finger, Willy Gorongfel is adjusting his flower garland with a similar worried panache, and getting ready to announce some minor change of personnel among the US Navy advisors.

The cast of characters this film unfolded made one realise the appeal of such locations to Maugham (or that of Africa to Waugh). The imagination can toddle along in second gear, because everyone is already there for you on a plate. The white-haired honorary consul with considerable local land interests, across whose face an expression of tired panic passed whenever he was asked a direct question; the matronly Peace Corps girl, dressed for a high-school graduation in long skirt, Berlei bra and hair-ribbon; the hush-voiced Yapese commentator, Dimblebying on about the opening of a new TV studio; and the American technicians lolling by their beercans and discussing with less than *summa cum laude* perspicacity their own cultural impact.

And as for a plot, the mere overlay of cultures, with its automatic ironies, provides that. In one episode a group of Japanese tourists, their baggage wrapped in black plastic bags, splashed ashore for an away-from-it-all trip (their movie cameras were slung protectively round their necks in much the same way as their predecessors, on earlier amphibious landings, would have carried their rifles). To their surprise, though, they found the locals getting in first: the island TV station had turned out to film their arrival. Jap met Yap; the sophisticated tourists sipped coconut milk picturesquely from the shell, while the hick locals unzipped themselves a tinned drink. 'They're really human, that's what I think,' commented one tourist; while another presented an island girl with an Eeyore set of presents: a balloon, a biro and a pennant. The girl probably took them home and bartered them for a spare part for her VCR.

It was all comic, and sad, and largely about American guilt. But the guilt is coming — as it usually does — a little late, and the issue of television seems not much more than a scapegoat. The American people's lawyer was right to worry about the fragile Yapese culture; but alas, there didn't appear to be that much of it left to protect or revive. All we saw was the age-old Ceremony of the First Hair-cut, in which the hair is cut close, the head is washed, and bright orange turmeric is rubbed into the boy's tonsure. So far, so ethnic. Then comes the traditional *click click* of the pocket Kodaks, followed by the arrival of the traditional presents — in this case, an iced birthday cake and a loaf of Mother's Pride. The woman presiding over the ceremony said at one point, 'It'd be easier if I stand, but my bony body will show' — a wry acknowledgment both of the cameras and of a new, Westernised *pudeur*. The line made one glumly aware of the essential problem: not how to decolonise a colony, but how to unknow knowledge.

In an otherwise Gobi week, *Newsnight* (BBC-2) came up with a scoopette. Robin Denselow persuaded Paul Groody, chief mortician at Baumgardner's mortuary, Fort Worth, to let him film for the first time the

room in which Lee Harvey Oswald was embalmed. Mr Groody had hitherto withheld his permission, doubtless as a matter of principle; but also, perhaps, because he didn't want the wider world to discover the amazing truth: that this historic location looks remarkably similar to almost any other room in which

they pull teeth, neuter cats, or stuff stiffs.

On a largely self-indulgent note, I was delighted to catch 'A Doctor' on *Looking Good, Keeping Fit* (BBC-1) giving judgment on a meal of two beefburgers, baked beans and baked potato. He called it 'a nutritious, balanced meal'.

Verdicts on the Day

ANTONY EASTHOPE examines television coverage of 14 May 1980 and its implications

The BBC as well as the IBA continue to claim their news service is impartial and objective. It is a claim very few people on the left would accept. Television news seems unsympathetic to the Labour movement, for example generally giving the impression that any industrial action is unreservedly a 'bad thing'. Yet it is hard to spot precisely where and how such impressions are created.

The Glasgow Media Unit has studied misrepresentation in the explicit content of a number of broadcasts. But impressions and suggestions are also made in the way news is presented, in what seems to be just a neutral means to get the message across. Current practices of television journalism and 'good' television need to be examined as well.

This means looking closely at one typical transmission. It happens to come from the BBC though a similar analysis could be made of ITN. Because of football the BBC-1 9 p.m. news on 14 May did not go out until 9.56. Its political significance was crucial since it gave 11 minutes' coverage to the TUC's Day of Action. In these 11 minutes and 1,460 words there were 10 main speakers: Kendal the reader, five reporters in different parts of the country, Bill Hamilton in Barking, one who interviewed Len Murray, Murray himself, Martin Adeney who gave an editorial summing up. Footage also included the voices of two Leeds bus-drivers and a local Conservative; there were also the chanting voices of the demonstrators.

Like Hollywood of old, television news has a number of genres for different stories. There is the international disaster genre, the funeral of a VIP, the IRA bomb story. The Day of Action was a political action — effectively the first national call for a political strike since the Chartists' Holy Month in 1839. Nevertheless for 14 May the genre used was that for the industrial dispute. The result was particularly devastating for the TUC's intention of making a political statement. The content of this appeared only in vaguest summary when Murray said the Day was meant to focus attention 'on the inadequacies, the irrelevance, and the damaging consequences of government policy'. The strike genre reduced the Day of Action to a report of numbers.

Throughout the coverage people and places that continued production were referred to as 'normal' (six times). Sometimes industrial action was reported neutrally — shipyards 'stopped work' and 'production stopped' at Ravenscraig. It was also referred to pejoratively as a kind of bomb damage — a Welsh tinplate works was 'a major casualty', West Region of BR was 'badly hit'.

No positive value attached to those who

supported — or rather 'turned up' (twice) — for the demonstrations. The TUC was represented only by Murray and marching demonstrators. No other union leaders appeared, no shop stewards, no local officials (even though the *Money Programme* the previous Sunday found one to give a clear account of the political aims of the Day). Two bus-drivers working in Leeds gave their view of the Day ('Rubbish') as did one local Conservative. No demonstrator spoke a word. They were seen shouting and then always the same 'Maggie Out' slogan. 'Seen' is particularly significant. In the version of trade union activity presented in these 11 minutes there is only the Leader and the led, the one lonely voice and an inarticulate, threatening, *lumpen* crowd.

Good journalism must be vivid, colloquial, witty if possible, and above all concise. Brevity is especially important in television news. So it has become committed to an elliptical style of journalism that lets through political assumptions unchallenged. For example, the reporter in London concluded:

as drivers made the slow journey home Scotland Yard praised them for their patience. And the verdict on the Day? Bad, but not as bad as expected.

The words run together the commuters' supposed opinion with the judgment of the police. This combined authority is not distinguished from the programme's own assessment. The same search for condensation and colour permits Martin Adeney to say:

The Day of Action was conceived in the dark days of winter in the steel strike . . .

The journalistic cliché (winter of discontent) associates strikes with cold, darkness and evil. To say the Day was 'conceived in the dark days of winter' implies though does not state that it was some kind of satanic birth. 'The TUC decided on the Day of Action at the time of the steel strike' would be formal and dry. But it would be more neutral.

Like the cinema television is a visual medium, the friendly little screen ('telly') looked down at by the family. Television news has become highly visual and every story must now be told with pictures. Through the technique of using location footage television news seems to carry the viewer into unmediated contact with reality. There it is — the demonstration, the Leeds bus-driver, Len Murray himself. The effect obscures the very careful way footage is *selected*. Visual interest is one principle of this selection, a preference for exciting images that may have little to do with serious news value.

Location footage is empirical proof that

what is said to have happened has happened. But as well as being evidence images may also carry powerful connotations. To take one example, the London reporter said that 'Commuters were prepared for the worst' over a shot of a gentleman with his briefcase in the basket cycling past traffic down a sunlit street. The shot is evidence that a commuter cycled to work. At the same time it conveys much more — a sense of holiday, a justified break from mental labour to the enjoyable manual labour of cycling. It picks up memories of the middle-class version of 1926 when public schoolboys fulfilled the childhood dream of being engine-drivers for a day. Further it suggests a cheerful British amateurism and willingness to improvise. So it connects with war memories and the myth 'Britain can take it'. That this is not fanciful is shown by the crucial opening of the whole broadcast—'The country keeps running' (the opening for the 5.40 BBC-1 and 6.55 BBC-2 news was 'Business as usual'). The strongly positive connotations of this image contrast with the negative connotations of the chanting demonstrators (= 'mindless mob'). In 1926 Reith defined BBC policy on the General Strike by saying: 'There could be no question about our supporting the government in general.' Nowadays both the BBC and ITN are more careful to try for balance at the level of explicit and challengeable assertion. But the pretence of objectivity only makes lack of it more insidious. Hidden assumptions and implications come across in the way news is packaged. The main coverage of the Day of Action presented a malign view of the activity and intentions of the Labour movement. As Britain moves deeper into crisis and confrontation, views will become ever more polarised. Television news will have to work much harder than it did on 14 May if it is to convince people of its impartiality.

Films

David Wilson

In For Life

McVicar (X) *Rialto*

The Fiendish Plot of Dr Fu Manchu (A)
Warner West End 2; Studio, Oxford Circus; Scene, Leicester Square; Columbia, Shaftesbury Avenue; ABCs Fulham Road, Edgware Road, and Bayswater; general release from Sunday

Italian cinema 1931-44 National Film Theatre
1-30 September

John McVicar, B.Sc., is now a successful journalist and broadcaster. Mr McVicar's *alma mater* was one of Her Majesty's prisons where, serving a second long stretch for armed robbery, he took an Open University degree in sociology. Too much to hope that *McVicar*, to which this biographical note is appended, would have anything to say about the sociology of crime, even though McVicar himself is jointly credited with the script. What it does say would be old hat to any old lag. Prison deforms; survival is conning the screws; getting out is all. Where it makes a point, the film hard labours it, as when a long-

term prisoner, threatened with some future torment by a guard, responds with 'But you're in for life, aren't you?'

McVicar is Roger Daltrey of The Who, who thinks he might have drifted into crime himself if he hadn't found an alternative career in the music business. It's a passable impersonation, aided and abetted by Adam Faith's Cockney cheek as partner in crime Walter Probyn. These two spend much time in the prison showers, digging a hole to freedom to the accompaniment of rather more plangent percussive noise on the soundtrack than they might reasonably have expected on the job. Hole burrowed, they escape, and the rest is McVicar's return to old haunts and a new passport, via an odd interlude with Georgina Hale, undressed in a kitchen apron. Domestic bliss is Cheryl Campbell (miscast) and an extended lyrical romp in the park, cut short by an armed robbery and recapture when the police fix a grass. All this is competently enough done, TV cops and robbers style, by Tom Clegg. The only question is why it asks no questions, an uneasiness evidenced in the sore thumb line given to our hero's troubled wife to the effect that he is an animal on the hunt (this after he has peppered a security guard with shotgun pellets). A statutory bent copper, all smarmy smiles and greasy palm, says something about the media's personality cult of the supercrook. Ditto *McVicar*.

Sad to report, Peter Sellers's last film is a mishmash. Stumbling between Sax Rohmer spoof and non-vintage Goon show, *The Fiendish Plot of Dr Fu Manchu* is a sorry testament to collaborative dispute. Sellers was evidently unhappy with the way the film was going, and sat himself in the director's chair previously occupied by Piers Haggard. The result is there to see, an unhappy blend of mistimed sight gag and juvenile joke ('I must go to the laboratory, I want to go to the laboratory very badly' is only one of the worst). Sellers doubles up as Fu Manchu and his occidental adversary Nayland Smith, dragged out of retirement with his fetish lawn mower.

The plot, to flatter it, hinges on the Chinese arch-fiend's efforts to renew his stock of an elixir which will keep him going for a second century. Early promise, involving a malfunctioning clockwork tarantula, dissipates as Sellers seems to be looking behind the creaking scenery for Secombe and Milligan to help him salvage a shambles. Also involved are a pair of Scotland Yard bumbblers, carrying banners for English eccentricity, and a couple of FBI agents brought in for the ride and the American market. And tap-dancing police constable Helen Mirren, transformed into Fu Manchu's playmate when she tires (and the film tires with her) of impersonating Queen Mary — for reasons too simple-minded to recount. The only thing which takes off is an Elizabethan cottage, back-projected from rustic England to the Alps to provide a change of scene. The running gags limp.

The National Film Theatre has an ambitious season of Italian cinema before neo-realism, with films by lesser known lights like Camerini and Blasetti complemented by early works by De Sica and Visconti (*Ossessione*). Much here to discover, among the costume epics and domestic dramas, not least the fact that the Italian cinema under Mussolini (himself an enthusiast) managed on occasion to circumvent, if not subvert, the fascist norm.

Weekend Competition

No 2632

Set by Fat Jeff

Warwickshire County Council is paying a public relations firm £350 a week plus expenses to 'improve the image of school meals'. We're sure you could do the job just as well for much less money, so let's have up to 100 words of best restaurant critic's prose by 12 September.

No 2629

Set by Frank Shortstraw

Odes to John Arlott, C.L.R. James or Tom Stoppard.

Report

By F.R. Spofforth

Dozens of tear-stained laments for the retirement of the big A (or Apple Charlotte, as May Day called him) offered gratifying confirmation of his popularity, but were often just a teeny bit too sentimental. W.S. Brownlie was not strictly accurate (Arlott never fails to keep one informed of the tally), but captured exquisitely the atmosphere of Radio 3's commentary box. Some stylish tributes to James and Stoppard rounded off a pleasing comp. Eight smackers a winner.

The big gasholder's higher up today;
 Around the ground a policeman makes his way;
 A piece of paper blows from left to right;
 Will it rain tomorrow? Well, it might.

The keeper's cap is really rather odd;
 The batsman gives the pitch a little prod;
 Behind the bowler's arm a man has stirred;
 That paper's back — or maybe it's a bird.

A letter from a listener talks
 Of . . . goodness, it is hot here in the box;
 An aircraft passes loudly overhead;
 The groundsman here's first class — his name
 is Fred.

A small boy fields the ball, and throws it well;
 A good crowd for a Monday? Hard to tell . . .

John Arlott, thanks for all of this, and more.
 When you've a minute, could we have the score?
 W. S. BROWNLIE

I'm awful when it comes to names
 So haven't heard of C.L.R. James.
 It seems that you are just the ticket
 For reconciling Marx with cricket
 And beating it into the crass
 That what the game concerns is *class*.
 (Although I rather find it palls
 And seems to me a lot of balls.)
 You're one of those who have the knack
 Of putting into paperback
 A deeply learned transformation
 Of any simple recreation
 Into a dialectical persuasion
 That it's a meaningful occasion.
 So, C.L.R., (same name as Clive),
 Though not a buff, I hope you thrive.
 NICHOLAS MURRAY

Stoppard, did you play the same
 Dreary cricket match at school?
 One wonders why you like the game,
 Why your pleasure doesn't cool.
 Perhaps our country cricket started
 As a game that one could stand,
 Pastime for a lion-hearted
 Flaxen Saxon yokel band;
 Since then Norman yobs have played it,
 Formalised the rustic rules;
 You should know that millions hate it,

Think the game's for flannelled fools.
 Maybe the thing for you is Dada,
 But for us it's slow and wetish:
 The more one thinks the more it's harder
 To understand your cricket fetish. T. GRIFFITHS

Must this sad sodden summer be really the last
 We shall hear you at turn of a knob?
 Sadder still the next summer, when this one
 is past,

And no Arlott is there on the job.
 So delightful the phrases you deftly employed,
 It was almost as though we were there;
 But I could not agree when you said that
 Clive Lloyd
 In his hat looked like Paddington Bear.

But I treasure the rest, absolutely spot on,
 ('Willis whipping his horse' on his run)
 Vivid visual images, pure vintage John,
 All delivered in Hampshire homespun.
 Quite the best combination, which nothing
 could beat,

Was to listen to you on the air
 With the TV on silent. But Lloyd, I repeat,
 Never once looked like Paddington Bear.
 JOYCE JOHNSON

Every good boy deserves favour
 Who venerates Bradman and Hobbs,
 If you're glad I'll be frank, you're a raver
 Whether heroes score hundreds or blobs.
 Your cricket's no new found land passion,
 But like Albert's Bridge mellow and true,
 But alas, dirty linen's in fashion,
 The professional foul is on view.
 There are travesties, such as the he-man
 Who bowls jumpers and bumpers to maim,
 County Clubs he may enter a free man,
 But he's merely a slave to mock-fame.
 I reflect how your pen punch could whop hard
 Those sport-spoiling knaves round the head,
 Until they retire — bowled by Stoppard —
 And like Rosen and Guilden are dead.
 GERRY HAMILL

Soviet competition with Geller black. My mild
 knowledge of Geller's opening repertoire enables
 me, I hope, to deduce the game with some con-
 fidence.

White: A. Random-Russki Black: E. Geller
1.P-Q4, N-KB3; 2.P-QB4, P-K3; 3.N-KB3, P-Q4;
4.N-B3, B-K2; 5.B-N5, 0-0; 6.P-K3, P-KR3; 7.B-R4,
P-QN3; 8.B-Q3, B-N2; 9.BxN, BxB; 10.PxP, PxP;
11.Q-N3, R-K1; 12.R-Q1, N-B3; 13.B-N1. If
 13.NxP, N-R4 is strong. Perhaps 13.QxQ is possible
 but perhaps I've got the order wrong! 13... N-R4;
14.Q-B2, P-N3; 15.P-KR4! P-KR4. Now White's
 obvious moves have run out so he decides to go for
 glory. **16.P-KN4! PxP; 17.P-R5, PxN.** 17... Rx-
 Pch immediately is also interesting. **18.PxP.** Now
 White's threats are serious but Black has a stinging
 counterblow: **18... RxPch! 19.PxR.** Alternatively
 (a) 19.K-B1, B-R3ch; 20.K-N1, B-Q6! and the attack
 has changed hands in a big way viz. 21.RxB, R-
 K8ch; 22.K-R2, Q-Q3ch. (b) 19.K-Q2, N-B5ch;
 20.K-B1 and now perhaps the simplest way to kill
 White's play is 20... RxN (21.PxR? B-N4ch or
 21.QxR, B-N4ch or 21.PxPch, KxP). **19... B-**
R5ch; 20.K-Q2. Again if 20.K-B1, B-R3ch is killing.
20... N-B5ch; 21.K-B1, Q-N4. Clearly White is in
 a terrible mess. If 22.PxPch, K-B1; 23.Q-R7, Qx-
 Pch; 24.K-B2, Q-B7ch mates. He tries to bail out but
 to no avail. **22.RxB, QxPch(!) 23.R-Q2, Q-K8ch;**
24.Q-Q1, QxR; 25.QxP, PxP; 26.R-N2, Q-R3ch;
27.K-B2, R-KB1 resigns (... N-K6ch follows).
 June prizewinners: Messrs Cornforth, Bradley, Gar-
 fath, Sahasrabudhe and Thorat £7 each; Messrs
 Deshmukh, Nash and Taylor £5.



Tony Miles

Chess

No 195 June problems

The June problems were an easy set, mainly because
 186 had to be abandoned because of printing errors.
 In **problem 183 (2kr3r/pp3ppq/2pQ1n1p/**
4R3/3P1BPn/1P6/1P2PPI/6K1) White wins with
 1.R-K8! NxR (forced); 2.Q-N8ch, K-Q2; 3.QxPch
 and now (a) 3... N-B2; 4.QxNch, K-K1; 5.N-B5,
 R-Q2. Simplest now is 6.Q-K5ch with mate shortly,
 though the game choice of 6.Q-B8ch, R-Q1; 7.Qx-
 Pch is, of course, adequate, as is 6.Q-N8ch, R-Q1;
 7.Q-K5ch and probably half a dozen other se-
 quences. (b) 3... K-K3 when either 4.Q-QBPch, K-
 K2 (if ... N-Q3; 5.N-B5 or ... R-Q3; 5.P-Q5ch
 winning quickly); 5.Q-B5ch, K-Q2; 6.N-B5 (and if
 you really want to quibble Mr T, 6... QxN can be
 met by 7.QxPch); or 4.N-B5 (eg ... R-Q2; 5.Qx-
 Pch, N-Q3; 6.P-Q5ch, K-B3; 7.Q-B3ch, K-N3; 8.N-
 R4 mate) kills.

Problem 184 (r3r1k1/p4ppp/2p5/2Pp4/
8/q1NQP1BP/5PPI/4K2R) was simple. 1... P-

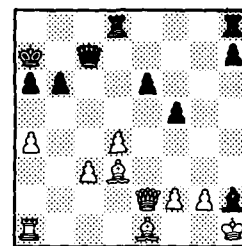
Q5! 2.QxP, Q-R8ch leaves White in a trilemma:
 3.Q-Q1, QxNch; 3.K-K2, QxR; or 3.N-Q1, QxQ.

Problem 185 (6rk/7p/Q2R1p2/1p2n3/
4b3/1P4NP/1P2PPI/2q5) was more interesting.
 The most obvious try 1... N-B6ch; 2.PxN, BxP
 threatening 3... Q-R8ch! 4.NxQ, R-N7mate can be
 defused by 8.R-Q8(!) or even 5.P-KR4. The real
 solution is quite beautiful: 1... Q-B1! Now 2.P-B3,
 NxPch really does work so White has nothing better
 than 2.NxQ, RxPch; 3.K-R1, RxPch! (but not, note,
 ... R-N4/3/2/1 ch; 4.P-B3!); 4.K-N1 and Black
 can choose from a variety of mates eg ... R-N7ch;
 5.K-R1, R-N5/... 1ch; 6.K-R2, N-B6ch; 7.K-N1,
 R-N8mate, ... R-K/Q/xPch; 5.K-N1, N-B6ch;
 6.K-R1, N-N4ch; 7.K-N1, NxPmate etc. There is,
 though, an alternative win with 1... RxN, eg
 2.KxR, Q-N4ch; 3.K-R2, QxPmate, or 2.PxR, Qx-
 BP; 3.R-Q8ch, K-N2; 4.Q-R7ch, N-B2! I must
 (slightly reluctantly) admit that this does win but as
 it only nets a piece (eg 2.R-Q8ch, K-N2; 3.Q-R7ch,
 N-B2; 4.R-N8ch, KxR; 5.Q-N8ch and QxRch) rather
 than a clear forced mate I cannot give it full credit.

Problem 186 was, as I mentioned, beset by gremlins.
 Whilst it was obvious that the black K + Q were
 reversed, not everyone guessed that the same was so
 of the white royal family. Because I was abroad
 there was no time to print a correction and 186 had
 to be eliminated. The position came from an enter-
 taining game (only vaguely recalled) in an internal

Problem 195

Black, to play, is an ex-
 change ahead but White
 has serious threats (Bx-
 RP, QxP and simply P-
 N3). What is happening
 and how should the
 game go? Answers to
 me at the NEW
 STATESMAN postmarked
 no later than 10
 September.

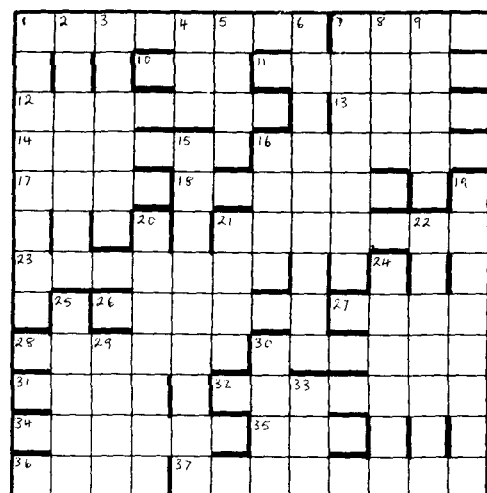


Solution to problem 193

A study with a hole! "Solution": 1.N-N4, B-R2;
 2.N-K5, P-Q7; 3.N-B4! P-Q8 = Q/R; 4.N-N6ch!
 BxN stalemate. But 1... B-R7! 2.N-K3, P-Q7; 3.K-
 Q7, K-N2; 4.K-K6, K-B3; 5.K-B5, B-N8! 6.N-Q1, K-
 Q4 and Black wins.

Salamanca: 33 'Savoy Bill?'

**PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three
 correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 33,
 New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V
 7HJ, by first post 9 September.**



Six unclued answers have titular connections and
 their unchecked letters may be given by DOC. C.,
 FILMDEPT.

ACROSS

- 7 Bulky Executioner's main point — doom (4)
- 10 How many doughty heroes come out with some hot words (in the 'Duke') (3)
- 11 Victim of violent dispute having yen for wing (6)
- 12 Such a condition would produce endless psellism (7)
- 13 They stick out in miniature (4)
- 14 E.g. Nanki-Poo (no novice) in reserve a little way yonder (6)
- 16 You've no longer to fear a fantasy that has the wrong ending (6)
- 17 Peer's partner, ripe for changing sides? (4)
- 18 Make like 20? (if guy's long misshapen) (6)
- 21 Crown and robe etc. for Luiz alas Gondolier's lost old son, decked out (7)
- 23 He's no time for ecstatic arousal? (7)
- 26 See tar labouring for hut (6)
- 27 No limits in Titipu for construction of foreign dwelling? (4)
- 28 Fondness of some that end reveals (6)
- 30 What will do for ragged

edge on part of ship? —, say? (6)

- 31 What's indistinct but headless will give you the shivers (4)
- 32 Panic at being tricked — by Ralph & co., he (7)
- 34 Goody! See the one I'm to marry! (6)
- 35 Margaret, mad initially, say (3)
- 36 Male to exist among the sisters, cousins and aunts? (4)

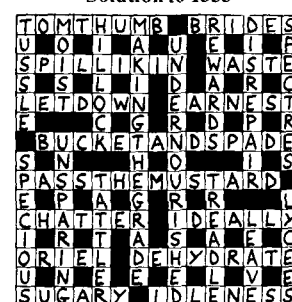
DOWN

- 1 Housman's lad holding work of some ancient Roman priests (8)
- 2 Ring, silver, worked with hammers (7)
- 3 6's persecutor of witches, for each providing heat outside? (6)
- 4 Female well content (3)
- 5 Like Maybud, foremost in all Robin Oakapple's shy yearnings (4)
- 7 Reasonable force required with chopper for this sentenced Colonel (7)
- 8 Composer, one that's English, capturing the Queen's Navee (4)
- 15 'A plump and pleasing person' in local uprising,

vessel with bow at the stern? (9)

- 16 Some male child (4)
- 20 Ye'd a Dee that's dread-ful, brought about by him in 37 (7)
- 21 Tried, but not finished off with ceremony (4)
- 22 Insinuator — child who is incumbent? (7)
- 25 Follows those final pieces on violin (5)
- 29 Point to stick in mass that's unfeeling (4)
- 30 Big D on foredeck — man's shattered (4)
- 33 Soft water plant (3)

Solution to 1353



Prizewinners to No 1353

Mrs B. J. Dixon (Bath)
 N. H. Beveridge (Edinburgh)
 Alex Lavery (Belfast)

APPOINTMENTS



HOUSE OF COMMONS (Department of the Clerk of the House)

SELECT COMMITTEE TEMPORARY ASSISTANTS

The Environment and the Social Services Select Committee each requires a Temporary Assistant to provide specialist assistance to the Clerk of the Committee and to undertake research in connection with particular enquiries.

The Environment Committee requires an Assistant to cover housing questions. Applications are invited for this post from candidates with a good degree in Economics or Statistics together with several years' practical experience as an economist in the housing sector. Applications from candidates with other good first degrees will be considered if they have done post-graduate work as economists in the housing sector.

The Social Services Committee is appointed to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the D.H.S.S. and the work of the Assistant could cover economic, social and administrative questions. Applications are invited for this post from candidates with a good degree (or equivalent professional qualifications relating to work in this field).

For both posts the preferred age range is 28-35 years and for a successful candidate within this range the salary is likely to be between £9,616 and £11,516 according to age, qualifications and experience. Applications from particularly well qualified candidates aged from 25-27 will also be considered. The salary for this age group is likely to be between £7,966 and £9,571. There is a non-contributory pension scheme with interchange arrangements with other Public Service pension schemes.

The appointments will commence as soon as possible after 1 November 1980. For the Social Services Committee post the appointment will be for a period of 2-4 years. For the Environment Committee post the appointment will be for a period of one year in the first instance.

Strict political impartiality is required of all House of Commons staff and Temporary Assistants will be expected not to engage in political activities for the duration of their appointments.

For further details and application form write to the **Establishments Office, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA** or telephone **01-219 5598** between 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Closing date for return of application forms 26 September 1980.

LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON

Housing Department HELP US TO GIVE HELP

We have two vacancies in our Advisory Division, both of which will provide a challenge and satisfaction to applicants keen on a career in housing management.

The Advisory Officer

(ref. HG.322)

will be in a team responsible for all aspects of housing advice in a Housing Action Area, including waiting list applications, improvement grants, tenancy problems, homelessness, compulsory purchase etc.

The successful applicant for the post of

Administrative Officer

(ref. HG.162)

will be involved in duties relating to non-Council accommodation. He/She will develop and maintain links with Housing Associations and other bodies providing alternative housing, and will generally assist home seekers to meet their needs in this sector.

Both posts are graded **AP4 (£5,994-£6,510 p.a. inclusive - pay award pending)**

For a full job description and application form, contact the Director of Housing, Staffing Section, 292 Essex Road, London N1 3AZ (tel. 01-226 3300 X.385). Closing date 12 September 1980.

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SUNDERLAND POLYTECHNIC Faculty of Humanities

ARTS COUNCIL CREATIVE WRITING FELLOWSHIP

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The writer appointed will be expected to pursue his or her own work, to participate in literary activities within the Polytechnic and the local community and to encourage the reading and writing of poetry in every practicable way.

The Fellowship will be for one year in the first instance, with the possibility of renewal for a further year.

The salary of the Fellowship will be £6,500 per annum.

An application form and further particulars may be obtained from the **Personnel Officer, Sunderland Polytechnic, Langham Tower, Ryhope Road, Sunderland, SR2 7EE**, and applications together with copies of published work, should be submitted by 12 September 1980.

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Brent CDA C/O 190 High Road, NW10.

Closing date 10 September. Phone 451 1122

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

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Application forms and further details from the **Academic Registrar, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL** quoting Ref. No: 3/2A/80/G. closing date for receipt of applications is 18 September 1980.

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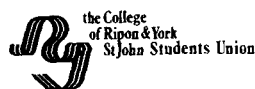
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Journal of the Commission for Racial Equality
Editor: Sheila Patterson

Volume VIII No.1/2,
Spring-Summer 1980

'ETHNIC' and 'RACIAL' ORIGINS AND QUESTIONS

On the Feasibility of Identifying 'Race' and 'Ethnicity' in Censuses and Surveys — What's in a Name? — Australia Ponders — Ethnic Questions in the Canadian Census — Questions on 'Race' in the Census of Population: A Comment — The Non-Usage of 'Race' in the Netherlands — Letter to the Editor — CRE Viewpoint — Census 1981: The Ethnic Question.

CHILDREN, PARENTS, SCHOOLS

Parental Behaviour and Cognitive Style in 10-year-Olds in England and Jamaica — Ethnic Awareness and Ethnic Differentiation amongst Primary School Children.

OTHER FEATURES

The Revision of United Kingdom Nationality Law — Towards a Curriculum for Ethnic Minority Pupils — From Rags to Riches: Manchester Pakistanis in the Textile Trade — The Liberal Party and Immigration Control: A Study in Political Deviance — Towards Effective Race Relations Training — Correlates of Asian Immigration — The Mental Health of Immigrants — Fair Employment in Northern Ireland — Immigration and Race Relations: Political Aspects — Legal Decisions affecting Ethnic Minorities and Discrimination.

REPORTS

Anglo-American Symposium on Ethnic Segregation in Cities — Art and the 'new community': an exhibition by Indian artists living in Britain — Votes and Policies: Ethnic Minorities and the General Election 1979

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Meetings

BILL WEDDERBURN will speak and answer questions on Tory Plans for Industrial Relations Law during TUC Congress Luncheon (12.30-2.30) on Tuesday 2 September at the Royal Albion Hotel, Old Steyne, Brighton (Preston Suite). Food and Bar available. Entrance 50p (at door). Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth Street, SW1

KRISHNAMURTI, the well-known revolutionary religious speaker and educator, will be holding public talks and discussion meetings at Brookwood Park Educational Centre, Brookwood, Nr. Alresford, Hants, at 11.30 a.m. on 30, 31 August and 2, 4, 6 and 7 September. No tickets needed. For details of train and coach arrangements from London please telephone Bramdean 228.

PUBLIC MEETING on Sunday 7 Sept. at 11 a.m. 'The Middle East and the Israeli Trade Union Movement'. Speaker: Mr Dov B. Ben-Meir Secretary of Tel Aviv Labour Council & Central Committee of Histadrut-Israel Federation of Labour. At Hillel House, 1 Endsleigh St, London WC1. All welcome.

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